



DRAFT

Playgrounds



PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL

March 2021

PLAYGROUNDS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

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Introduction

Plans of Management provide clear guidelines for the effective short and long-term management of all land owned by Council or under Council's control. The Playgrounds Plan of Management examines the broad range of issues associated with playgrounds in North Sydney in a comprehensive and holistic manner and identifies clear objectives for management and maintenance. The Plan of Management clarifies management policy and direction, both for Council staff and the community.

North Sydney Council aims to provide a range of safe, fun, inclusive and challenging playgrounds that complement the character of the park in which they are located. For the purposes of this Plan of Management, playgrounds are public play environments comprising play equipment, complementary ancillary facilities such as fitness equipment and associated hard and soft landscape works. North Sydney's playgrounds primarily cater for children aged from 2 to 12 and their parents and carers. Council manages and maintains 33 playgrounds within an area of 10 square kilometres.

The Playgrounds Plan of Management sets out Council's strategies to manage, upgrade and maintain its playgrounds over the next 5 - 10 years. This document supersedes Council's Playgrounds Plan of Management 2016.

Land affected by this Plan of Management is a combination of Council-owned land and Crown land owned by the NSW State Government. As such, it is managed under the *Local Government Act 1993* and the *Crown Land Management Act 2016*.

This Plan of Management draws on information contained in relevant Acts, planning documents and studies, including:

- *Local Government Act 1993 (LG Act)*
- *Crown Land Management Act 2016 (CLM Act)*
- *Native Title Act (Cwlth) 1993 (NT Act)*
- The North Sydney Community Strategic Plan 2018 – 2028
- Local Environmental Plan 2013 (LEP), North Sydney Council
- Recreation Needs Study 2015 (RNS)

The Playgrounds Plan of Management also considers outdoor fitness equipment as well as skate and scooter parks. This is the most appropriate Plan of Management to address these outdoor recreation facilities as fitness equipment is often co-located with playgrounds, and skate and scooter parks cater to the needs of children, teens and older members of the community who have 'outgrown' playgrounds.

Council's generic Foreshore Parks & Reserves and Neighbourhood Parks Plans of Management should also be referred to when reading this document.

A major review of the Playgrounds Plan of Management will take place every 5 – 10 years to allow policy and planning issues to be revisited and updated. Implementation of the actions listed in the Plan will be reviewed regularly.

1.0 **Management Framework**

1.1 **Structure of the Plan of Management**

The Playgrounds Plan of Management is divided into 6 parts:

Part 1 examines what a Plan of Management is, outlines the scope of this Plan, the legislative framework that drives and guides it, its purpose and its core objectives. It explains the link between this Plan of Management and Council's land management goals and details the importance of community engagement. It also examines the issue of leases, licences, permits and other estates

Part 2 provides a general description of North Sydney's playgrounds, and examines their characteristics and resources

Part 3 identifies and examines the major planning issues essential to understanding the overall directions of the document and discusses current management practices

Part 4 sets out the core values and management objectives, as determined by Council and the community through previous studies such as the Recreation Needs Study 2015 and the Playgrounds Methodology Document 2015. These objectives have been used as the basis for formulating the implementation plan

Part 5 is the implementation and performance component of the Plan of Management. A matrix sets out the objectives, proposed actions and performance indicators and anticipated timing for each issue and action. An indicative works program further details the staging of all works and actions

Part 6 is the Appendices

1.2 **Purpose of the Plan of Management**

This Plan of Management provides an overall framework for management of North Sydney's playgrounds in coming years. Specifically, it has been prepared to:

- Meet Council's obligations regarding public land management under the requirements of Section 36 of the *LG Act* and the *CLM Act*
- Ensure the requirements of the *NT Act* for the management of Crown land are addressed
- Enable Council to renegotiate or enter into leases, licences and other use agreements

The production of this Plan of Management is closely linked with Council's overall land management objectives, as set out in the North Sydney Community Strategic Plan 2018 – 2028. The following information has been taken from the Community Strategic Plan:

Council's goal regarding playgrounds (encompassed in the Community Strategic Plan under Direction 1 – 'Our Living Environment') is:

1.4 'Public Open Space and Recreational Facilities and Services Meet Community Needs'

The following objectives are derived from that goal:

1.4.1 Maximise use of existing, and protect, enhance and expand public open space

1.4.3 Provide infrastructure to support physical activity

1.3 Legislative Framework

The *LG Act* requires that Plans of Management must be prepared for Council-owned community land. Plans of Management for Crown land were previously adopted under the *Crown Lands Act 1989*; however, the *CLM Act* requires Council's to prepare Plans of Management for Crown reserves as per the requirements of the *LG Act*.

North Sydney's playgrounds are located on a combination of Council-owned and Crown land and are zoned RE1 Public Recreation under Council's Local Environmental Plan 2013. (Refer **Appendix 4 – Zoning of Playgrounds**).

1.3.1 NSW Local Government Act 1993 (LG Act)

The *LG Act* provides the legislative framework for Council's day to day operations. It identifies a Council's responsibility to actively manage land and to involve the community in developing a strategy for management.

The *LG Act* requires all community lands to be covered by a Plan of Management that identifies:

- The category of the land
- Objectives and outcomes for the land
- How Council proposes to achieve objectives and outcomes
- The way by which Council proposes to assess its performance
- Expressly authorise any leases, licences or other estates

The nature and use of community land may not change without an adopted Plan of Management.

1.3.2 Crown Land Management Act 2016 (CLM Act)

The *CLM Act* assigns certain functions to Council managers. As a crown land manager, Council is authorised to classify and manage its dedicated or reserved Crown land as if it were public land within the meaning of the *LG Act*. Dedicated or reserved Crown land may be used only for the following purposes:

- The purposes for which it is dedicated or reserved, or
- Any purpose incidental or ancillary to a purpose for which it is dedicated or reserved, or
- Any purpose specified in a plan of management for the land, or
- Any other purposes authorised by an Act.

Council, as Crown Land Manager, may issue leases and licences over Crown land in line with the *LG Act*, as per the assigned category and with consideration of the reserve purpose.

Generally, when managing dedicated or reserved Crown land, and for the purposes of this Plan of Management, Council:

- a) must manage the land as if it were community land under the *LG Act*, and
- b) has for that purpose all the functions that a local council has under that Act in relation to community land (including in relation to the leasing and licensing of community land)

Objectives of the *CLM Act*

The Objectives of the *CLM Act* are to ensure that Crown land is managed for the benefit of the people of New South Wales, and in particular:

- To provide for the ownership, use and management of the Crown land of NSW, and
- To provide clarity concerning the law applicable to Crown land, and
- To require environmental, social, cultural heritage and economic considerations to be taken into account in decision-making about Crown land, and
- To provide for the consistent, efficient, fair and transparent management of Crown land for the benefit of the people of NSW, and
- To facilitate the use of Crown land by the Aboriginal people of NSW because of the spiritual, social, cultural and economic importance of land to Aboriginal people, and, where appropriate, to enable the co-management of dedicated or reserved Crown land, and
- To provide for the management of Crown land having regard to the principles of Crown land management.

Principles of Crown land management

- Observe environmental protection principles in relation to the management and administration of Crown land
- To conserve the natural resources of Crown land (including water, soil, flora, fauna and scenic quality) wherever possible
- Encourage public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land
- Encourage multiple use of Crown land, where appropriate
- Use and manage Crown land in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity, where appropriate
- Occupy, use, sell, lease, licence or otherwise deal with Crown land in the best interests of the State, consistent with the above principles

The *CLM Act* provides a new regime for the management of Crown land, and Council is now responsible for compliance with native title legislation for the Crown land that it manages.

1.3.3 Native Title Act 1993 (Commonwealth) (NT Act)

Native title is the legal recognition of the individual or communal rights and interests which Aboriginal people have in land and water, where Aboriginal people have continued to exercise their rights and interests in accordance with traditional law and custom since before the British asserted sovereignty over Australia. Native title rights and interests are formally recognised under the *NT Act*.

On Crown land, Native Title rights and interests must be considered unless:

- Native title has been extinguished, or
- Native title has been surrendered, or
- Determined by a court to no longer exist

Council must manage Crown land in accordance with Part 8 of the *CLM Act* in relation to native title and ensure the requirements of the *NT Act* for the management of Crown land are addressed.

All activities on Crown land included in this Plan of Management (refer **Appendix 1 – Schedule of Land**) must address the issue of native title. Whilst a successful claim for native title will lead to official recognition of native title rights, native title rights are considered to pre-date such recognition. Native title can therefore be relevant to activities carried out on the land even if no native title claim has been made or registered.

The native title process must be considered for each activity on the land and a native title assessment must be undertaken. Almost all activities and public works carried out on the land will affect native title and require validation under the future act procedures in Division 3 of the *NT Act* by Council's Native Title Manager.

The *NT Act* sets out procedures for notification and opportunity to comment which must be followed in certain circumstances (for example if the proposed activity/act is a 'public work' as defined in Section 253 of the Act).

1.4 Land Categorisation and Core Objectives

Section 3.21 of the *CLM Act* states that dedicated or reserved Crown land may be classified and managed as if it were public (community or operational) land within the meaning of the *LG Act*. Section 3.23(2) of the *CLM Act* requires Crown land to be categorised consistent with the *LG Act*.

North Sydney's playgrounds are located on a combination of Council-owned and Crown land. All are classified as community land and are categorised as 'park'.

According to the *LG Act 1993*, land should be categorised as 'park' under section 36(4) of the Act if the land:

is, or is proposed to be, improved by landscaping, gardens or the provision of non-sporting equipment and facilities, for use mainly for passive or active recreational, social, educational and cultural pursuits that do not unduly intrude on the peaceful enjoyment of the land by others.

Land Category	Core Objectives
Park (LGA 1993 - Section 36G)	(a) <i>to encourage, promote and facilitate recreational pursuits in the community involving organised and informal sporting activities and games, and</i> (b) <i>to provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes and for the casual playing of games, and</i> (c) <i>to improve the land in such a way as to promote and facilitate its use to achieve the other core objectives for its management.</i>

1.5 Leases, Licences, Permits and Other Estates

A lease, license or permit is a contract between a landowner and another entity, granting that entity a right to occupy an area for a specific period. Leases, licenses and permits formalise the use of community land by groups such as sporting clubs, community groups and schools, or by commercial organisations and individuals providing facilities or services for public use.

A lease is typically required where exclusive use or control of all or part of a park or reserve is required. The terms and conditions of a lease should ensure that the lessee undertakes proper management of the facility such that it is maintained in a safe and visually pleasing condition, and that the interests of Council and the public are protected.

Licences allow multiple and non-exclusive use of an area. A licence may be required where intermittent or short-term use or control of all or part of a park or reserve is proposed. Several licences for different users can apply to the same area at the same time, provided there is no conflict of interest.

Under the *CLM Act*, Councils are authorised to manage Crown land as if it were community land within the meaning of the *LG Act*. This enables Councils to issue licences, leases, permits and other estates for Crown land reserves in the same way they do for any Council-owned public land, with consideration of the reserve purpose. Essentially, the process for issuing tenures will depend on the classification and categorisation of the land, as well as its applicable planning controls associated with the land zoning.

This Plan of Management expressly authorises the issue of leases, licences, permits or other estates over playgrounds categorised as Park, provided that:

- The purpose is consistent with the reserve purpose of the land
- The purpose is consistent with the community land classification and the core objectives for the category of the land
- The purpose is consistent with the zoning of the land under North Sydney LEP 2013
- The lease, licence, permit or other estate is for a permitted purpose listed in the *LG Act* or the Local Government Regulations 2005
- The issue of the lease, licence, permit or other estate and their respective provisions can be validated by the provisions of the *NT Act* (for relevant Crown reserves)
- The land is not subject to a claim under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983*
- The lease, licence, permit or other estate is granted and notified in accordance with the provisions of the *LG Act* or the Local Government Regulations 2005
- The issue of the lease, licence, permit or other estate will not materially harm the use of the land for any of the purposes for which it was dedicated or reserved
- The purpose is consistent with the core values and management objectives listed in Section 4.1 of this Plan of Management

- Sub-leases are only allowable for the same purpose as the original lease in accordance with the requirements of Section 47C (1) (a) of the *LG Act*

For leases, licences or estates for terms up to five years, section 47A applies and councils are required to undertake a public consultation process as set out in section 47(1) through (4) of the *LG Act*.

Councils must consider all submissions received during the specified period for public consultation. However, there is no requirement to obtain the Minister for Local Government's approval to enter the lease, licence or estate.

Section 46A of the *LG Act*, which sets out the requirement to call for tenders, if a lease or licence for a term in excess of five years, is not being granted to a non-profit organisation.

Any proposal to grant a lease, licence or estate for a term of over five years on community land must be in accordance with section 47 of the *LG Act*. If, during the specified period for public consultation Council receives a submission in the form of an objection, the consent of the Minister for Local Government is required for them to enter the lease, licence or estate.

Community land must not be leased or licenced for more than 21 years, or 30 years with the consent of the Minister for Local Government. Any lease or licence for more than 21 years must have prior public notice according to the requirements of Sections 47 and 47A of the *LG Act*, and if an objection is made to the tenure because of the notice, the Minister for Local Government's consent is required.

Licenses for short term casual use or occupation of land included in this Plan of Management for a range of uses may be granted in accordance with Section 46(1)(b)(ii) for the purposes specified in Section 116 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005. All short-term casual uses and occupations are subject to Council's standard conditions of hire, approval processes and booking fees, as well as to native title manager advice (for relevant Crown reserves).

1.5.1 Rail Corp Leases

There are several small parcels of RailCorp-owned land in North Sydney that are now publicly accessible, and that Council manages as neighbourhood parks via beautification leases which are renewed annually. One of these, Wollstonecraft Railway Station Park contains a playground. This is noted in **Appendix 1 – Schedule of Land**

1.6 Community Consultation

Community consultation plays an important role in the production of Plans of Management, providing Council with a sound understanding of issues from people who are familiar with and use the relevant parks and reserves. To a large degree, the views expressed by the community guide Council's management of the land.

Public engagement also generates an understanding of Council's land management aims, combats misinformation and misunderstanding, and fosters support for Council's programs and policies. The consent and co-operation of the users of open space facilitates management and lends weight to the status of this Plan of Management.

Prior to general public exhibition of a new Crown land draft Plan of Management, Council is required to submit the draft Plan of Management to the appropriate representative of the owner of the land under section 39 of the *LG Act* (Currently the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Crown Lands). The Department reviews the draft Plan of Management and advises Council of any properly required provisions to include in the Plan of Management. Council then amends the draft Plan of Management (if required), and places it on public exhibition (under section 38 of the *LG Act*).

Exhibition of the draft Playgrounds Parks Plan of Management for a 28-day period, followed by a 14-day period to receive submissions allows interested parties to comment on and have input into the final document. The following steps will generate widespread awareness of the draft Plan of Management:

- Posting the draft document on Council's website for information and comment, and providing details of how to make a submission
- Providing the opportunity to comment in accordance with sections 24JB(6) and 24KA(7) of the *NT Act*
- Notifying all Precincts, Council's Sport and Recreation Reference Group and other known stakeholders that a new draft Plan is on exhibition, and inviting comments
- Providing hard copies of the draft document to stakeholders, upon request

Writing a Submission

Submissions give stakeholders an opportunity to express their opinions, provide information and suggest alternatives to Council's proposed management strategies.

To ensure submissions are as effective as possible:

- (1) List all points according to the section and page number in the Plan of Management
- (2) Briefly describe each subject or issue you wish to discuss
- (3) State which strategies you agree or disagree with and give reasons
- (4) Suggest alternatives to deal with any issue with which you disagree

Written submissions should be sent to:

The General Manager
North Sydney Council
P O Box 12
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2059

Attention: Landscape Planner

Email: council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au

Comments regarding this or any other adopted Plan of Management may be submitted at any time. All Plans of Management are reviewed regularly, and at the time of the review new issues and actions can be incorporated and existing actions amended. All adopted Plans of Management are available on Council's website.

Note:

This Plan of Management requires that for any activity/action specified in it, a native title assessment and validation under the *NT Act* be carried out by Council's Native Title Manager prior to the commencement or approval of that activity. NTS Corp and the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council will be notified of the preparation of the draft Playgrounds Plan of Management, and invited to comment, in accordance with the Native Title (Notices) Determination 2011 (No. 1).

2.0 **Playground Characteristics and Resources**

Playgrounds are a very special part of North Sydney's open space network. They are much more than equipment and physical spaces; they are places for families and friends to gather, places for people to be active, and places for learning. The interactions that occur in public open space can teach children about the world around them and the people who live in it. Children enjoy playing; it makes them happy, gives them the opportunity to burn energy, gain confidence, learn new skills, and experience challenge and to interact with other children. Playgrounds engender a sense of belonging and pride in the local area and they promote community wellbeing. North Sydney aims to provide custom designed, sustainable and fun play environments for the community's use and enjoyment.

Play Australia is the peak national advocacy organisation for play in Australia. The organisation promotes the value of play and supports those who work in the industry by providing inspiration, advice, access to information and professional services. Play Australia's mission is '*a connected and healthy Australia where PLAY is a part of everyone's daily life*'.

Kidsafe NSW Inc provides support, information and resources across several key safety areas including playground safety. It is internationally regarded as a leader in injury prevention, and has relationships with government, research and advocacy organisations around the world. Its vision is '*a safer world for kids*'.

Parks and Leisure Australia is the leading industry association for professionals in this section. It supports members by providing training, professional development, research advocacy as well as a range of products and services. It conducts playgrounds tours and seminars, runs conferences and state and national awards programs that have recognised North Sydney Council playgrounds.

Together these organisations provide many resources for members, including access to a comprehensive library of research paper and articles on all aspects of play. The following information on the value of play and the importance of managed risk-taking is sourced from this literature.

2.1 The Value of Play

Children need space away from their homes where they can socialise and spend time with their peers. Public space, as opposed to the private space of a backyard or school, is important, as it is accessible to the whole community. When children play, they are not just filling in time, they are learning to interpret their world. Playgrounds provide vital, low cost and accessible family focused recreation environments. Play facilitates the learning of life skills, and for this reason the provision of quality outdoor play spaces is vitally important in local communities.

Play provides a non-threatening context for children to learn. Through their interactions with the environment during play, children gain control and ultimately mastery over their bodies and develop a range of manipulative and motor skills. They learn about themselves and others through their social interactions. Play also facilitates language development, creative thinking and problem solving, and helps children deal with complex and competing emotions.

2.2 Play and Risk

Outdoor play provides open-ended, dynamic and varied opportunities which are unpredictable and at times risky. However, the risks and challenges of being outdoors provides rich opportunities for learning, problem-solving and developing social competence. Children gain mastery and a sense of accomplishment, thus further encouraging them to face new challenges. Providing healthy risk-taking opportunities is an essential component of quality outdoor play.

Over the last several decades, decreased urban space for physical play combined with changing attitudes towards the risks involved in some physical activities has decreased both the quality and quantity of children's outdoor play experiences. However, play providers including Councils are now acknowledging children's desire and need to take risks in their play by providing more stimulating and challenging outdoor play environments.

Public playgrounds offer children the opportunity to develop and test skills in a relatively safe environment. The value of risk taking is in the opportunity it offers for learning and development. Playgrounds allow children to develop coordination, to learn how to use play equipment safely, and for its designated purpose, to negotiate a new environment, to take acceptable risks and to learn the consequences of risk taking.

Effective risk assessment and management requires:

- Distinguishing between acceptable and unacceptable risk (including the likelihood of coming to harm and the severity of that harm)
- Understanding the benefits, rewards or outcomes of an activity
- Involving parents and carers in identifying children who need specific support
- Publicising expectations for behaviour of parents and carers
- Encouraging children to assess risks and possible consequences
- Implementing a systematic playgrounds maintenance program

Council's goal is to manage risk, rather than to eliminate it. Thus, while safety issues must be addressed, avoiding all risk is not the solution, as doing so limits children's participation in worthwhile experiences that promote their optimal health and development. The ultimate aim for play providers should be to provide outdoor play environments where the risks of serious injury are reduced, but creativity, challenge and excitement are maintained.

2.3 Hierarchy of Parks and Playgrounds

The level of use a playground receives is closely associated with its size, its location and the size of the park in which it is situated. Playgrounds generally attract local users who are aware of their location and the facilities offered. However, playgrounds that are one component of a large, multi-use open space area (such as St Leonards Park or Bradfield Park) attract users from further afield, as people will generally travel greater distances to open space areas that offers a range of activities and experiences.

The status of parks in North Sydney as 'local', 'district' or 'regional' is determined by:

- Proximity to other people-attracting landuses (eg foreshore areas, walking tracks, shops and other community facilities).

- The presence of complementary facilities in the wider park (exercise equipment, public amenities, BBQs, seats and picnic tables, sportsgrounds, walking tracks and scenic views)
- Accessibility (including proximity to public transport, availability of parking, presence of barriers such as railway lines and major roads, as well as steps and uneven and/or steep topography)

Generally, but not always, the status of a playground will reflect the status of the park in which it is located. North Sydney aims to ensure that all its playgrounds contain at least some inclusive items and elements, regardless of their size

Local Playgrounds

Most of North Sydney's playgrounds are local playgrounds. Local playgrounds provide recreation opportunities close to home (they serve the people of a residential neighbourhood, usually within 500m safe walking distance, ie a walk of up to 10 minutes). They consist of various items of play equipment in a shaded, landscaped setting with ancillary facilities including seating for parents and carers. Local playgrounds are generally best suited to younger children.

Public amenities are not generally provided in local playgrounds. It is expected that most visitors to local parks and playgrounds are within walking distance of their own homes. Most parks containing local playgrounds are small; and maximising the open space available for play and recreation is critical. The high cost of building and maintaining public amenities is another factor to consider.

Local playgrounds provide daily access to play and an opportunity for children and families to connect with others in their immediate neighbourhood. (This is often lacking these days as many children travel to schools far outside their local area). Daily access to play is far more important to children's social, mental and physical health than sporadic visits to larger, 'destination' playgrounds.

District Playgrounds

District playgrounds are generally located in Council's larger parks. They serve several adjoining neighbourhoods within a 5km radius. Visitors may drive or walk to district playgrounds. Visitors tend to stay longer in these playgrounds because the many and varied items of play equipment keep children engaged for longer and the provision of additional ancillary facilities such as public amenities and picnic tables encourages and enables a longer stay.

District playgrounds typically provide inclusive play opportunities and equipment suitable for a wide age range (2 – 12 years), as well as ancillary facilities including seats, picnic tables, drinking fountains, public amenities and possibly complementary facilities such as water bottle refill stations, BBQs and exercise equipment.

Many parks with district playgrounds contain other recreation facilities that appeal to people of different ages (such as walking tracks, basketball rings and backboards, sportsfields and exercise equipment) and they can accommodate informal gatherings such as parties, picnics and informal play on adjacent lawn areas. Note: district playgrounds also serve as local playgrounds.

Regional Playgrounds

Regional playgrounds serve the entire North Sydney Local Government Area and adjacent communities, and they are destination sites capable of supporting longer stays and many return visits. Regional playgrounds are large playgrounds containing a diversity of inclusive play opportunities for children of all ages and abilities. Ancillary facilities in regional playgrounds include seats, picnic tables, drinking fountains and bottle refill stations, public amenities, shelters and BBQs. Adjacent lawn areas allow for informal play and picnics. The quality and quantity of facilities provided, and the frequency of maintenance, reflects the high visitation numbers.

North Sydney does not currently have any regional playgrounds, however the new playground planned for St Leonards Park, documented in the St Leonards Park Landscape Masterplan 2018, will be a regional playground, as befits the status of this significant park. Note: Regional playgrounds also serve as district and local playgrounds.

2.4 Playgrounds in North Sydney

The high population density of the North Sydney area and the limited opportunities to create new parks make thoughtful management of all types of public open space vital. Playgrounds are an important part of the total open space network; allowing children to develop physically, mentally and socially. North Sydney's suite of 33 playgrounds provides our community with a diverse range of quality, fun, accessible and unique playgrounds that are reasonably well-distributed throughout the Council area. Visitors can choose short visits to small neighbourhood playgrounds within walking distance or can travel to larger playgrounds which offer a range of facilities to occupy children for longer, as well as ancillary items such as public amenities, fitness equipment and picnicking facilities.

North Sydney takes a holistic approach to playground design and management; rather than creating a few big-budget playgrounds, we are establishing a network of unique, custom-designed playgrounds carefully distributed throughout the Council area that meet identified community needs and that represent excellent value for money. Consistent with most public playgrounds, North Sydney's playgrounds cater primarily for children aged between 2 and 12 years.

Council's original Playgrounds Plan of Management 1995 identified a need to develop new playgrounds which not only complied with Australian safety standards, but which were challenging, fun and capable of sustaining children's interest. This led Council to embark on a significant program of upgrading playgrounds, moving away from using off-the-shelf equipment and constructing site-specific playgrounds using in-house resources for design and some landscape construction. The program commenced in 1996 with the construction of a new playground in Tunks Park. The redevelopment of junior play facilities in Green Park, Cammeray, in 2013 saw the completion of this original upgrading program of Council's playground stock.

North Sydney now contains a suite of unique playgrounds that have been custom designed to complement their location. Council's playground design considers the intrinsic qualities of each site including its history, its landscape character, views and the presence of existing site features such as shade trees and sloping topography.

North Sydney's playgrounds range from those in natural settings such as Berry Island Reserve, where the playground is constructed predominantly of timber, and the play

equipment complements the surrounding bushland, to those in historical harbourside parks such as Watt Park, which has a maritime theme and play equipment that mimics the style and colours of equipment that would have existed when the park was created in the 1930s.

North Sydney's playgrounds aim to provide:

- the highest possible play value, within available resources
- play items that can accommodate many users at once, that are accessible to children of all abilities, and that offer users a variety of different sensations and experiences including rocking, swinging, spinning and climbing
- play items that are challenging and fun
- opportunities for free and imaginative play
- opportunities for interaction and co-operation among children of different ages, abilities and capabilities
- an inclusive play environment for all our community

Council's approach to playground provision has been validated both by our community (as gauged from feedback) and by industry recognition. Most recently, Sirius Street Playground (in Cremorne Point) was Highly Commended in the 'Public Play Spaces under \$500,000' at the 2020 Kidsafe National Playspace Design Awards. The award is especially valued because Sirius Street Playground was constructed for less than half this amount. In 2015, North Sydney Council's 'Three Playgrounds for less than \$0.5M' received the State and subsequently the National Award in the 'Playspace: Minor (<\$0.5M)' category at the Parks and Leisure Australia annual awards.

'Map 1- Playgrounds in North Sydney – Location, Distribution & Hierarchy' shows the location of all the playgrounds covered by this Plan of Management.

2.5 Ancillary Facilities

2.5.1 Shade

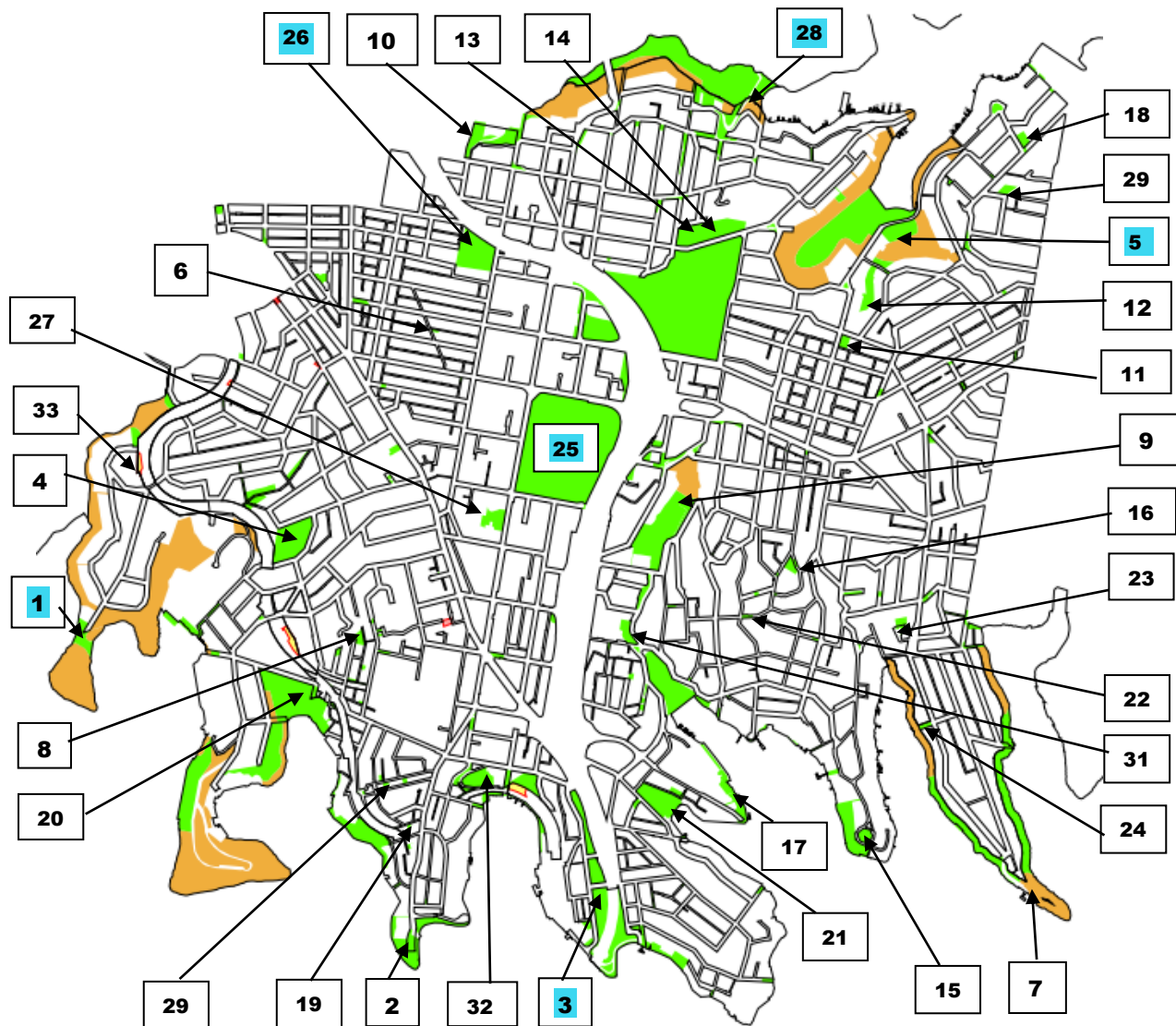
Council's playgrounds offer visitors a variety of settings, from partially shaded to fully shaded. Some playgrounds are shaded all day, while others receive better shade in either the mornings or the afternoons.

North Sydney's large network of playgrounds means that parents and carers have several playgrounds in their local area; and they can choose the most appropriate one for each playground visit. Council aims to provide the community with options, so that visitors may select a playground which suits their needs. Council encourages parents and carers visiting playgrounds in summer to carefully consider whether there is likely to be enough shade for their needs at the time of day they plan to visit.

2.5.1.1 Natural Shade

Vegetation is an attractive and environmentally friendly way to provide natural shade to playgrounds. Its effectiveness depends on the height of the tree or shrub, the density of the foliage and the size of the canopy. As a general rule, trees with a canopy that is dense and closer to the ground provide the best protection from direct UV radiation. The larger the tree canopy the greater the protection from both direct and indirect UV radiation.

MAP 1 - Playgrounds in North Sydney: Location, Distribution & Hierarchy



1	Berry Island Reserve	12	Grasmere Reserve	23	Prior Avenue Reserve
2	Blues Point Reserve	13	Green Park (Junior)	24	Sirius Street Playground
3	Bradfield Park	14	Green Park (Senior)	25	St. Leonards Park
4	Brennan Park	15	Hodgson's Lookout	26	St. Thomas' Rest Park
5	Brightmore Reserve	16	Ilbery Reserve	27	Ted Mack Civic Park
6	Cahill Park	17	Kesterton Park	28	Tunks Park
7	Cremorne Reserve	18	Lodge Road Playground	29	Victoria Street Playground
8	Euroka Street Playground	19	Mary French Reserve	30	W H Brothers Memorial Reserve
9	Forsyth Park	20	Merret Playground	31	Warringa Park
10	Fred Hutley Reserve	21	Milson Park	32	Watt Park
11	Grasmere Children's Park	22	Phillips Street Playground	33	Wollstonecraft Railway Station Park

26 District Playgrounds (all other playgrounds in North Sydney are Local)

Advantages of natural shade include:

- Vegetation makes a place pleasant for users – plants provide seasonal variation in perfume and colour, as well as attractive flowers, bark and foliage
- Vegetation provides environmental benefits including habitat for local wildlife, enriching the soil and absorbing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere
- Vegetation can screen unattractive views and provide privacy
- Vegetation can provide protection from the wind
- Carefully chosen trees can cool an area in summer

Additional environmental benefits of natural shade include less need to use non-renewable resources (used in many building materials) and fewer disposal problems as plants generally act as nutrients during decomposition. Using indigenous or local native plants assists with genetic conservation, and their suitability to local conditions means they are likely to thrive and require less maintenance.

2.5.1.2 Built Shade

Built structures (generally shade sails) may also be used to provide shade to playgrounds. Shade sails can be erected more quickly than a tree can grow, and the shade they cast is predictable. Careful consideration must be given to the location of supporting poles to ensure adequate distance from equipment and walking paths to ensure people cannot easily climb onto (and fall from) shade structures. The effects of high winds and likelihood of vandalism must also be considered.

2.5.2 Seating

Playground seating may be freestanding or integrated into the playground design. Many playgrounds in North Sydney incorporate low sandstone walls which provide informal seating. Such seating walls can also provide a barrier, preventing children from running in front of moving play items such as swings, and they can also provide physical separation between younger and older children. Free-standing seats and benches are often included in a playground, while picnic tables are typically situated adjacent to the playground, with paved or rubberised surface material providing easy access for all. Some playgrounds in North Sydney also feature tree seats, providing parents and carers with 360-degree views while simultaneously protecting the tree's root system.

2.5.3 Undersurfacing and Pathways

Playground undersurfacing material is installed in all of Council's playgrounds in accordance with Australian Standards relating to impact attenuation and fall zones. The Standards require that appropriate soft fall is placed underneath and around all playground equipment from which a user might fall, in order to reduce the effects of a fall.

Council generally uses a combination of organic soft fall and rubber under-surfacing. Organic soft fall is an economical option that provides a soft landing, can be traversed by strollers, complements the general park environs and is reasonably easily maintained. It allows water and nutrients through to tree root systems and protects the root zone from compaction. Although significantly more expensive, rubber under-surfacing is appropriate in high-wear areas (such as under swings), as well as under and around inclusive play equipment (such as in-ground carousels) and as a pathway, allowing easy movement for all within a playground and connecting inclusive items of play equipment.

Rubber under-surfacing can also provide opportunities for ground level play activities such as hopscotch, Twister and snakes and ladders games.

2.5.4 Fencing

Council offers playground visitors a choice of fenced, partially fenced and unfenced playgrounds. While fencing is appropriate in some locations, for example near major roads, fences are not desirable in all locations. In large parks fences visually disturb the continuity of open space areas, creating a barrier between the playground and the rest of the park. They can interfere with informal play and impede running games that are important contributors to children's physical fitness and health. Fences and gates can make playground access challenging for disabled or elderly visitors and can send an (unintentional) message to parents and carers that supervision of children (and sometimes dogs) is not required.

Where fencing may be necessary, opportunities to provide additional play value by including play panels and other items on the fencing should be pursued. The following photos illustrate how this can be achieved.



Play panel: Wollstonecraft Railway Station Playground



Play panel: Kesterton Park Playground

2.6 Planting and Other Landscape Works

Hard and soft landscaping are integral components of North Sydney's playgrounds. Shrubs and groundcovers perform a variety of functions; their fragrances, colours, textures and seasonal variation add interest, while mass planted areas can create distinct playground 'rooms', separating the various activities and age groups. They also provide visual and physical barriers to movement, and influence circulation patterns within the playgrounds.

Council uses earth mounding and carefully placed sandstone boulders to create visual barriers and to separate one area of a playground from another without resorting to more intrusive physical barriers such as fences.

Council's technical and horticultural staff have been creating planting plans for new and upgraded playgrounds since Council commenced custom-designing playgrounds in 1996. Over time, staff have developed a palette of plants that are both suitable for use in children's playgrounds and which are most likely to thrive. These plants are hardy, relatively low maintenance, attractive, and proven to withstand North Sydney's harsh coastal environment. Council's Bushland Management team contribute advice and assistance to planting plans developed for playgrounds that border bushland.

2.7 Playground Construction, Upgrading and Refurbishment Process

North Sydney Council's approach to playground design and management is to create a network of unique, custom-designed playgrounds well-distributed throughout the Council area, that meet the identified needs of the community, that are as inclusive as possible and that represent excellent value for money. Many of North Sydney's playgrounds are much-loved by the community; going forward, our aim is to improve and enhance these playgrounds rather than to change them significantly.

The lifespan of a playground depends on many factors, including level of use and exposure to harsh conditions. Playgrounds in North Sydney generally last between 15 and 20 years before major refurbishment or upgrading is needed, although popular foreshore playgrounds may not last this long. For this reason, the process of upgrading Council's playgrounds is not sequential, but is based on need, as determined by Council's Playgrounds Methodology Document (Refer Section 3.7.1). Note that the phrase 'major refurbishment or upgrading' does not include the one-off replacement of specific items that have been damaged or are particularly worn; this is carried out as needed.

Appendix 5 – 'Definitions' explains the difference between a playground upgrade and a playground refurbishment.

While each playground project is unique, the following standard design objectives have been developed to reflect Council's approach to playground management.

2.7.1 *Standard Design Objectives for Playgrounds in North Sydney*

- To provide playgrounds that are as inclusive as possible
- To provide some inclusive items and features in all playgrounds
- To provide a level of play equipment and facilities appropriate to the status of the park in which the playground is located
- To provide play equipment that offers users a range of different experiences (rocking, swinging, spinning, climbing etc.)
- To provide play equipment that caters to several children at once, encouraging co-operative play
- To utilise existing site features (for example trees, slopes and heritage features) to create site-specific playgrounds
- To use hard and soft landscaping as integral elements of the play environment
- To use existing mature trees to provide natural shade where possible, and to plant advanced trees to provide future shade
- To provide a range of ancillary facilities including (at least) some form of seating. The larger the playground, the greater the range of ancillary facilities
- To provide complementary facilities in larger parks to make them attractive to people of all ages and abilities. For example, outdoor fitness equipment, handball courts and accessible paths
- To minimise the visual impact of playgrounds in visually sensitive locations
- To create aesthetically pleasing play environments which appeal to children and carers alike, and which encourage interaction and allow easy supervision

- To encourage return visits by designing playgrounds that are challenging and stimulating for children, and pleasant places to be for parents and carers

2.7.2 *Standard Design Process for Upgrading/Refurbishing Existing Playgrounds*

1. Condition Assessment

On site assessment carried out to determine the condition of play equipment, ancillary items and hard and soft landscape elements.

2. Concept Plan

Prepared by Council's in-house design team. Typical features include:

- Replacement of worn play equipment with new items. Depending upon needs, the new items may be the same (as with well-loved items that have worn out), or may be similar, but offer improvements such as being more inclusive or able to accommodate more children etc
- Addition of new play items and ancillary features such as drinking fountains, picnic tables and trees within the existing playground footprint (where space allows)
- Provision of items and elements that make the playground more inclusive
- Expanded playground footprint (where desirable, and if space allows)
- Provision of complementary facilities such as exercise equipment (where budgets allows)

3. Consultation

Concept Plans are exhibited on site, on community noticeboards and on Council's website, and feedback is sought from current playground users, local residents and the general community

4. Concept Finalisation

Stakeholder feedback is collated, and the Concept Plan is amended

5. Quoting/Tendering

Quotation or tender documents are prepared. Criteria used to assess submissions include not only price but demonstrated understanding of the brief and of the park environment

6. Appointment of Contractor/Fabrication

Appointed playground fabrication company fine tunes design to ensure compliance with current Australian Standards. Any significant changes are reported to stakeholders

7. Construction

Installation of playground equipment by fabrication company. Construction of ancillary works by either the contractor or by a multi-disciplinary in-house team of horticulturalists, arborists, stone masons, carpenters and bush regenerators as appropriate

8. Promotion

On completion, Council's website is updated with new information and photos. A Playgrounds brochure 'A Place to Play' is also downloadable from Council's website: www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au. The information in the brochure is updated regularly to ensure currency (Refer **Appendix 3 – NSC Playgrounds Brochure: 'A Place to Play'**)

The following Table, **Table 1 – ‘Past Playground Upgrading in North Sydney’** lists all playgrounds in North Sydney and the year in which they were last upgraded, refurbished or were first constructed.

Table 1 – Past Playground Upgrading in North Sydney

Upgraded	Location on Map 1	Playground	Upgraded	Location on Map 1	Playground
2020/21	11	Grasmere Children's Park	2007/08	8	Euroka St Playground
2019/20	26	St Thomas' Rest Park		6	Cahill Park
	24	Sirius Street Playground	2006/07	3	Bradfield Park
2018/19	31	Warringa Park		19	Mary French Reserve
2017/18	4	Brennan Park	2005/06	21	Milson Park
	17	Kesterton Park		27	NS Community Centre - Ted Mack Civic Centre Pk
2016/17	9	Forsyth Park (new)		22	Phillips St Playground
2015/16	15	Hodgson's Lookout	2003/04	12	Grasmere Reserve
	32	Watt Park	2002/03	20	Merret Playground
2014/15	16	Ilbery Reserve		30	W H Brothers Memorial Reserve
	5	Brightmore Reserve	2001/02	25	St Leonards Park
2013/14	1	Berry Island Reserve	2000/01	18	Lodge Road Playground
	13	Green Park (junior)		29	Victoria Street Playground
	33	Wollstonecraft Railway Station Park	1999/2000	23	Prior Avenue Reserve
2012/13	7	Cremorne Reserve		10	Fred Hutley Reserve
2011/12	28	Tunks Park	1998/99	14	Green Park (senior)
2008/09	2	Blues Point Reserve			

2.8 Outdoor Fitness Equipment and Other Play Facilities in North Sydney

While this Plan of Management primarily targets the play needs of children in the 2-12 age group, it also considers the provision and siting of other recreational facilities for older children and others wishing to participate in outdoor recreation. It considers outdoor fitness equipment, skate and scooter parks, outdoor ping pong tables, basketball rings, backboards and half courts, handball courts and multi-use games areas. These facilities are often located close to playgrounds. Note: sportsgrounds and sports courts are addressed in Council's Sportsgrounds Plan of Management.

North Sydney offers a skate plaza in Cammeray Park and several parks contain outdoor fitness equipment. There are basketball rings and backboards in St Leonards Park, Green Park, and at the North Sydney Leisure Centre. There is an outdoor ping pong table in Bradfield Park. Brightmore Reserve contains a 'learner' cycle track with associated playground elements, suitable for use by children under 10 years.

Providing free outdoor facilities which are available for use at any time removes some of the barriers that may prevent people from exercising. Parks and reserves with fitness equipment and other facilities tend to be busier; this makes them feel safer and discourages antisocial behaviour. There is also less misuse of park furniture not intended for physical activity.

2.8.1 Outdoor Fitness Equipment

In the early 1980's outdoor fitness equipment was installed in the newly created Ted Mack Civic Park. The equipment was instantly popular; however, it remained the only example of fitness equipment in a North Sydney public park until fitness elements were included as part of the upgrade of Euroka Street Playground in 2008. Since 2008, fitness equipment has been installed in 7 other parks.

Outdoor fitness equipment allows park users to exercise in the fresh air and to connect with nature and with others in the community in a friendly, social environment. It can help improve the mental and physical well-being of users. Locating fitness equipment near playgrounds allows parents and carers to exercise whilst supervising children's play.

Fitness equipment is typically laid out as either a hub (one area containing several pieces of equipment), a cluster (several hubs in close proximity of each other), or a trail (pieces of equipment or hubs spread out along a path or track).

	
Waverton Park, Waverton This component of a fitness trail adjoins Merret Playground	Green Park, Cammeray A typical stand-alone hub

2.8.2 Skate and Scooter Parks in North Sydney

Skateparks are gathering places for local skateboard and scooter riders. Skateparks cater for children who have outgrown or are not interested in playgrounds, as well as for teens and older users. They provide a venue for leisure and physical activity, and act as important social spaces for this sector of the North Sydney community. In this Plan of Management, the term 'skatepark' is used to refer to facilities which can also be used by either skaters or scooter riders.

Benefits of skate and scooter parks include a reduction in anti-social behaviour (young people are more likely to behave badly when they have nothing to do and nowhere to go), a reduction in skateboarding injuries (most common skateboarding injuries occur outside skateparks), a reduction in damage to public and private property (without designated skateparks, skateboarders will use any and all terrain in their community) and an increase in the physical and mental well-being of participants.

'**Map 2 – Fitness Equipment & Other Play Facilities in North Sydney**' shows the location of the fitness equipment and other facilities covered in this Plan of Management.

MAP 2 – Fitness Equipment & Other Play Facilities in North Sydney



	Location	Type of Facility
1	Cremorne Reserve, Cremorne Point*	Outdoor Fitness Equipment
2	Euroka Street Playground, Waverton*	Outdoor Fitness Equipment
3	Forsyth Park, Neutral Bay*	Outdoor Fitness Equipment
4	Green Park, Cammeray	Outdoor Fitness Equipment, basketball ring/backboard
5	Kesterton Park, North Sydney*	Outdoor Fitness Equipment
6	Ted Mack Civic Park/Leisure Centre, North Sydney	Outdoor Fitness Equipment, basketball ring/backboard
7	Tunks Park, Cammeray	Outdoor Fitness Equipment
8	Waverton Park, Waverton	Outdoor Fitness Equipment
9	Cammeray Park, Cammeray	Skate Plaza
10	Bradfield Park, Milsons Point	Outdoor Ping Pong Table
11	Brightmore Reserve, Cremorne	Learner's Trike Track
12	St Leonards Park, North Sydney	Basketball Ring & Backboard

* Fitness equipment is directly associated with a playground

3.0 **Planning Issues**

3.1 Shade

While there is an expectation that Council will provide shade and shelter in and around play areas, ensuring the well-being of playground users is the joint responsibility of parents and carers and Council. The Cancer Council's Sun-Smart guidelines note that carers should not rely solely on Council to provide shade and shelter from the sun but should consider and implement sun-smart practices such as:

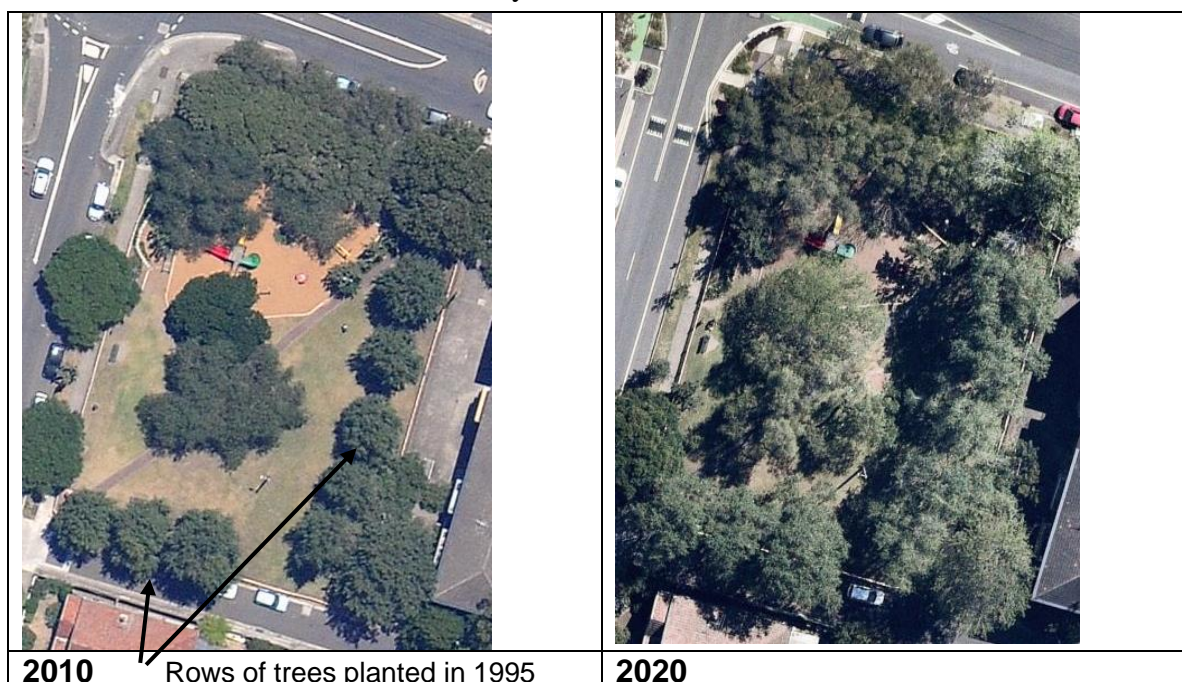
- Ensuring children and carers are wearing adequate protective clothing and hats
- Ensuring sunscreen is applied and re-applied
- Timing visits to playgrounds to avoid the hottest parts of the day

Council provides playgrounds with natural shade where possible. Children spend much of their time in man-made fully shaded play environments such as preschools, childcare centres, indoor leisure centres and shopping centres. Parks are one of the few easily accessible places where kids can get a true sense of playing outdoors; to see trees and sky above and feel the earth below.

When upgrading or refurbishing an existing playground or planning a new playground, Council sites play equipment, seats and picnic tables in shady locations where possible. Where there is enough space, and no significant impact on views, Council also plants additional trees to provide future shade and landscape amenity.

Planting shade trees in and around North Sydney's playgrounds has been occurring systematically since the implementation of Council's first Playgrounds Plan of Management in 1995 when a widespread program of planting shade trees in and around existing playgrounds where such trees were lacking was undertaken. 25 years later, these trees are reaching maturity, and now most playgrounds in North Sydney are well-endowed with natural shade. The following aerial photographs show the growth of trees in Grasmere Children's Park over 10 years.

Grasmere Children's Park, Neutral Bay



The installation of shade structures at playgrounds has significant budgetary and maintenance implications. Shade structures are expensive to install, and with limited available funding, their non-targeted installation will detract from the play value and quality of new or upgraded playground facilities. Shade structures detract from the natural character of park-based playgrounds and can be prone to vandalism, placing pressure on Council's playground maintenance budget.

Council installs built shade structures over playgrounds where existing natural shade is not adequate and where planting advanced trees will not supply enough shade in the short term. The intention is to remove the structures when the trees are sufficiently established and are providing an adequate level of shade.

Unforeseeable situations may arise where installing a shade structure is the best option. Wollstonecraft Railway Station playground was originally extremely well shaded by a row of Camphor laurel trees growing on private property along the western side of the playground. However, these trees were removed, leaving the playground in full sun. Council quickly installed a shade structure to keep this exposed playground usable. Additional advanced trees were also planted to provide future natural shade.

Wollstonecraft Railway Station Playground

	
<p>May 2014 - playground shaded by neighbouring Camphor laurels</p>	<p>Nov 2014 - Camphor laurels have been removed</p>
	
<p>April 2015 – Shade sails installed; new trees planted</p>	

When a new playground was constructed in and around the existing trike track at Brightmore Reserve, Cremorne, many new trees were planted to create shade in this exposed location. 2 shade sails were also installed to provide immediate shade. 10 years later, one sail has been removed as the area is now largely covered by natural shade.

Brightmore Reserve Trike Track & Playground



3.2 Dogs and Playgrounds

With numerous parks where dogs can be exercised off-leash, North Sydney is a dog-friendly area. Council understands that many families visiting North Sydney's parks and playgrounds will sometimes bring the family dog as part of their outing.

However, there are some restrictions on dogs near playgrounds. The following photo illustrates how playground name signs can incorporate information about restrictions concerning dogs in an attractive sign that complements the character of North Sydney's

parks. Clearly defined edges of playgrounds (including fencing) can also help people bringing dogs to playgrounds to understand where dogs cannot go.



All dogs in public places must be under the control of a competent person. Council is required by the State Government to enforce the laws concerning dogs, and Rangers may issue on-the-spot fines for infringements of the regulations listed below.

Under the *Companion Animals Act 1998* (Section 14), dogs are prohibited in the following public places:

- In or within 10m of any children's play areas
- Food preparation and/or consumption areas (unless it is a public thoroughfare such as a road, footpath or pathway)
- Recreation areas where dogs are declared prohibited
- Public bathing areas where dogs are declared prohibited
- School grounds (unless with the permission of the person controlling the grounds)
- Child care centres (unless with the permission of the person controlling the centre)
- Shopping areas where dogs are prohibited (unless secured in a vehicle, with the permission of the person controlling the place or going to or from a vet or pet shop); and
- Wildlife protection areas where dogs are declared prohibited

As per North Sydney Council's 'Local Companion Animal Management Plan', all Council parks and public reserves are off-leash areas except for:

- St Leonard's Oval (No. 1 and 2)
- All playing fields whilst organised sporting events are in progress
- All bushland areas
- Cremorne Reserve, Clark Park and Ancrum Street Park
- The Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability

3.3 Accessibility & Inclusion

Local government is responsible for ensuring that all its activities related to its infrastructure areas are as accessible as possible to, and consider the needs of, people with disabilities. This Plan of Management is informed by the 'Everyone Can Play' NSW Guidelines to create inclusive play spaces and the *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* which provides protection for everyone in Australia against discrimination based on disability.

Playgrounds should maximise opportunities for diverse play and social interactions between children, and between carers and children. As far as possible, playgrounds should incorporate the principles of universal design which are incorporated in the 'Everyone Can Play' Guidelines.

The 7 Principles of Universal Design are:

- Equitable Use (design it fair)
- Flexibility in Use (design it adjustable)
- Simple and Intuitive Use (design it elegant)
- Perceptible Information (design it obvious)
- Tolerance for Error (design it safe)
- Low Physical Effort (design it easy)
- Size and Space for Approach and Use (design it reasonable)

North Sydney's network of playgrounds are inclusive public outdoor spaces that offer meaningful and enjoyable play experiences for children of all abilities. Accessible play equipment and ancillary facilities are integrated into all playgrounds in North Sydney, encouraging interaction between users and enhancing the playground experience as a welcoming one for all.

Examples of how the concept of inclusion can be incorporated into playgrounds, and where this has occurred in North Sydney include:

- Well planted areas that provide various opportunities for nature and sensory play (the steppingstone path at Grasmere Children's Park)
- Equipment for all abilities and ages that is fully integrated into the playground and reachable for everyone (the creek line with water play activities at Tunks Park is situated at 'seating' height)
- Genuinely inclusive play opportunities where children of all abilities can play together and equally on the one element (ground-level carousel at St Thomas' Rest Park)
- Informal play opportunities that encourage creativity (talk tube and cubby house at Sirius Street Playground)
- Multiple play opportunities (both challenging and comfortable) to engage people of different ages, abilities and capabilities (equipment at Forsyth Park Playground including the large basket swing, accessible flying fox and in-ground carousel)
- Sufficient hard surfaces adjacent to seating to allow for wheelchair and pram parking without obstructing paths (Bradfield Park Playground)
- Ground-level activities (Twister game in St Thomas' Rest Park)
- Activities that target areas other than physical play such as sight / colour, tactile elements and sound (Music Room in St Leonards Park)

- Passive lawn areas away from the activity zone for rest and quiet play (Kesterton Park Playground)

Additional factors considered when a playground project commences include:

- Whether there are (or could be) pathways to the playground and through the park generally that meet Australian Standards
- The location of car parking (including any disabled parking spaces) in relation to playground
- The most suitable type of under-surfacing to install throughout the playground

Council's Recreation Needs Study 2015 identified the need to improve physical access to some of North Sydney's playgrounds. However, it is worth noting that improving the physical accessibility of playgrounds, particularly in the steep terrain of the North Sydney area, is often extremely expensive and comes at the cost of reduced play value. For example, rubber undersurfacing is approximately five times as expensive as organic mulch. Providing a suitably graded path to get to a playground can often cost as much as the playground itself.

The photograph below shows Merret Playground in Waverton Park. The large concrete ramp that allows all users to access the lower level of the playground was a key feature of this playground, and also the single most expensive element.



Concrete access ramp: Merret Playground, Waverton

Council carefully weighs the need to provide maximum play value for children with the need to make playgrounds as inclusive as possible, and generally, it is Council's larger (district) playgrounds that are the most inclusive. They are accessible to people of all abilities both in terms of getting to and around the playground, and in terms of the equipment and ancillary facilities provided. For example, when a new highly inclusive district playground was constructed in Forsyth Park, (featuring accessible and multi-person items including a ground-level carousel, an accessible flying fox, a large basket swing and an accessible rocker), provision of a long, ramped path to reach the playground, concrete paths within the playground and large areas of rubber undersurfacing were expensive, but appropriate measures.

3.4 Access & Circulation

3.4.1 Getting There

While many of North Sydney's playgrounds can be easily reached via a combination of trains, buses and ferries, because playgrounds generally serve the local community, many users arrive on foot. Playgrounds located in larger parks that offer additional recreation facilities such as outdoor gym equipment and playing fields or amenities such as harbour views tend to attract users from further afield.

Council encourages the use of public transport throughout the North Sydney area and discourages reliance on private cars in an effort to reduce the impact of cars on the environment and to reduce problems associated with traffic congestion and parking. Car parking near playgrounds is generally restricted to neighbouring streets.

3.4.2 Circulation

Playgrounds in North Sydney are designed to encourage users to circulate in a safe manner, with design lines avoiding 'forced movement zones' where possible. Issues such as fall zones, the trajectories of moving items such as swings and the location of 'forced movement zones' including the base of slides are all considered and addressed.

Design techniques to control movement through playgrounds include:

- careful siting and orientation of items of play equipment
- construction of physical barriers such as low seating walls, earth mounding, strategically placed sandstone boulders and mass planted garden beds
- separating play equipment suitable for young children from equipment likely to appeal to older children

3.5 Playground Management and Maintenance

This Plan of Management provides guidelines for the future use, development, management and maintenance of all public playgrounds in North Sydney; regardless of who owns the land (Council, Crown, Rail Corp NSW (Wollstonecraft Railway Station Playground) or RMS (St Thomas' Rest Park Playground).

Council must demonstrate that it exercises the utmost care in the management and maintenance of its playgrounds and similar facilities in order to meet the needs and expectations of playground visitors and to avoid criticism, claims and litigation. Adherence to relevant Australian Standards helps ensure that Council manages its duty of care to users of playground facilities and reduces the likelihood of claims due to injury. However, it is important to balance the issue of risk management with the need to provide a range of unique playgrounds that are fun to use and that challenge children physically.

North Sydney Council is a member of Australia's 2 playground industry peak bodies; Play Australia and Kidsafe NSW Inc, as well as the broader but still relevant Parks and Leisure Australia. Our aim is to work with these organisations and to utilise the resources they provide to ensure our knowledge of industry best practices is up-to-date and our staff are appropriately trained. These organisations have a wealth of accumulated knowledge and information that they offer to support members, promoting the value of play, every day and a safer world for children. They run training courses and networking events which are essential for staff professional development to ensure our management and maintenance of playgrounds in North Sydney is consistent with best industry practice.

Since 2004 Council has used a playgrounds database system to better manage playgrounds. The database stores information about each playground including:

- Facilities provided
- Manufacturer's information including required maintenance regimes
- Date and findings of maintenance inspections
- Action taken to repair damage and defects

Ongoing maintenance ensures all playgrounds in North Sydney remain safe and in good condition. Council carries out monthly inspections and maintenance audits of all playgrounds, in accordance with AS 4685.0.2017: '*Playground Equipment and Surfacing – Part O: Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation*'. This ensures public safety is maintained and improved and reduces risk to Council in terms of litigation. Standard maintenance activities include ensuring appropriate softfall is present under and around relevant pieces of equipment, removing any rusted or splintered equipment or materials and replacing or repairing ageing items of equipment. Council also repairs or replaces damaged or vandalised play equipment when it is identified.

Playgrounds come with inherent maintenance requirements and a series of related, ongoing costs. While the construction of a new playground or the upgrading or refurbishment of an existing playground is a one-off cost, maintaining Council's existing playground stock is a significant, important and ongoing commitment that needs adequate recurrent funding.

By analysing funds spent on playgrounds maintenance in previous years, Council's playgrounds managers can determine current and likely future maintenance budgets with a reasonable degree of accuracy. However, in recent years the costs of maintaining playgrounds have substantially increased, and it is imperative that the annual playground maintenance budget reflects this.

3.6 Playground Use

North Sydney's playgrounds are designed to cater for children of diverse abilities and capabilities between two and 12 years of age, however, not all playgrounds cater for children of all ages. While several of Council's playgrounds (including Forsyth Park and Berry Island Reserve) challenge children at the top end of this range, most playground users in North Sydney are considerably younger. In addition to play equipment, playgrounds contain a range of ancillary facilities to aid user's enjoyment. These may include seats, picnic tables, water fountains and bottle refill stations. Complementary facilities including outdoor gym equipment cater for parents, carers and other members of the community.

There are intrinsic issues with attempting to accommodate a wide age range in a limited space; older children can dominate and displace the younger ones or even worse, cause injury with their more boisterous activity. Council offers visitors a network of playgrounds; while there is a playground to suit all children, not every playground will suit all children.

It is also worth considering that age does not necessarily equal capability. Skills, confidence and the desire to challenge themselves vary from child to child.

First-hand observation and community feedback tell us that playgrounds have become popular destinations for parent and carers of children under two who are seeking to enjoy the fresh air and socialise with others. Public playgrounds have never been considered to cater for crawlers, mainly due to the potential for conflict with more mobile older children and hygiene issues. Playground equipment designed for public use generally comes with a recommended age range and Council is not currently aware of any equipment specifically recommended for crawling age children in a public setting. Parents and carers with children under two must consider the location of moving equipment and circulation routes if letting their children crawl in playgrounds.

The role of parents and carers at playgrounds is vitally important. They are responsible for supervising children in their care at all times, and in ensuring their children are using equipment appropriate to their capabilities. Children's development rates vary, and a piece of equipment that one five-year-old may be capable of using may not be appropriate for another 5-year-old. It is the job of parents and carers to consider this when they visit a playground. Often (but not always) play equipment is self-regulating; if a child cannot access a piece of equipment by themselves, it is not intended for their use.

Similarly, parent and carers are responsible for considering which pieces of equipment, and indeed which playgrounds are appropriate to use at particular times of year and times of day. North Sydney's network of playgrounds offers parents and carers a variety of playgrounds ranging from fully shaded facilities (such as Sirius Street Playground) which are excellent choices for hot, sunny, summer's days, to playgrounds that have less shade due to the presence of scenic views which may be better choices in winter, or at either end of the day.

Parents and carers are encouraged to read Council's Playgrounds brochure: '*A Place to Play*', which can be downloaded from Council's website, to decide which playgrounds are most likely to suit their needs.

3.7 Playground Upgrading Program

The life expectancy of playgrounds in North Sydney is generally between 10 and 20 years. Two key variables affecting longevity are coastal exposure and level of use. As such, the process of assessing, prioritising, refurbishing and upgrading playgrounds is an ongoing one.

Council's original Playgrounds Plan of Management 1995 identified the urgent need to upgrade North Sydney's playground stock, and in 1996 a methodology document entitled '*Selecting and Upgrading Playgrounds*' was prepared, establishing an evidence-based process for prioritising playground upgrading and/or creation of new playgrounds.

The document was revised in 2001, and again in 2011 to accommodate new demographic and condition information. A new works program was developed in 2015.

3.7.1 Playgrounds Methodology 2011 (updated 2015)

Council's Playgrounds Methodology document considers a variety of factors in order to determine priorities for upgrading existing playgrounds. It also considers opportunities to create new playgrounds in areas of identified need. A recent study undertaken by Lane Cove Council found that the North Sydney LGA has approximately one playground for every 1933 residents; this figure is similar in neighbouring Willoughby (one playground per 1688 residents), however Lane Cove Council has one playground per 750 residents.

Factors considered in the Playgrounds Methodology assessment process are:

1. Assessment of Existing Playgrounds

Each existing playground is assessed and given a score according to:

- Current condition of equipment and ancillary facilities
- Whether the amount of equipment and ancillary facilities in a playground is commensurate with the status of the park in which it is located (local, district or regional)
- Presence of relevant associated landuses (consider recent developments in the area that may affect use of the playground)
- New demographic information and trends

2. Identifying potential locations for new Playgrounds

The following factors are used to identify potential locations for new playgrounds:

- Location and distribution of existing playgrounds
- New demographic information and trends
- Other relevant factors (including likely ease of construction, accessibility, topographical constraints, zoning etc)

Combining the results of the Assessment of Existing Playgrounds with the results of the process identifying potential locations for new playgrounds leads to the development of a new playground works program.

Works identified in the current Playgrounds Methodology document are almost complete; the upgrading and refurbishment projects that are still to take place are listed in Section 3.9 of this document. The timetable to implement these projects is shown in 5.2 – Indicative Works Program. Preparation of a new Playgrounds Methodology document is one of the key actions in this Plan of Management.

3.8 Other Recreational Opportunities for Young People in North Sydney

Council's Recreation Needs Study 2015 identifies the importance of creating more 'social/family recreation spaces' in North Sydney. Social/family parks are those that offer general amenity and restorative benefits as well as a range of inclusive facilities that cater for inter-generational social gatherings, such as:

- children's play equipment and ancillary facilities such as bubblers
- fitness and outdoor gym equipment
- basketball hoops and backboards, handball courts etc
- outdoor ping pong tables
- space for informal sport and games
- seats, picnic tables, BBQ's
- lawn areas for informal picnicking and relaxing

Where possible, consideration should be given to co-locating those sport and fitness facilities that cater for teenagers and adults with some playgrounds. Co-locating facilities close to playgrounds encourages interaction between age groups and enables older siblings to play in a stimulating environment while supervising the younger ones. Seniors, including grandparent carers, also benefit from having these other play facilities located

with or close to playgrounds. Providing more social/family recreation spaces is an ongoing commitment for Council.

3.8.1 Fitness Equipment

Outdoor fitness equipment is a valuable community asset available to people of all ages and abilities. The popularity of existing fitness equipment in North Sydney and the number of requests that Council receives indicates that additional facilities are wanted and needed, and this is supported by the findings of Council's Recreation Needs Study 2015. Council is committed to increasing the amount of fitness equipment in parks and reserves to meet identified community needs.

Site Assessment Procedure

The suitability of parks in North Sydney to accommodate fitness equipment can be determined by considering the following factors:

- *Size of the park*
Generally, the larger the park, the more facilities it can accommodate
- *Presence of other facilities in the park*
Council is committed to developing suitable parks as 'social/family spaces' (RNS 2015) which offer recreation opportunities for people of all ages and abilities. Public amenities are desirable but not essential
- *Distribution*
Presence (or absence) of similar facilities nearby
- *Accessibility of the park*
Consider public transport links, pedestrian paths and cycling trails
- *Site features*
Consider topography, existing view lines, shade
- *Community requests*

Other Considerations

Constructing an outdoor fitness facility involves more than just purchasing and installing the equipment. Impact attenuating undersurfacing such as rubber softfall or artificial turf is required, and there is a range of other items that could be provided to encourage use and make the experience as enjoyable as possible, including:

- Drinking fountains and bottle refill stations
- Bike racks
- Seating
- Explanatory signage (relating to the equipment)
- Additional tree planting for shade and amenity

Generally, the parks in North Sydney which are most suitable to accommodate fitness equipment are medium to large size parks that already contain a variety of people-attracting facilities. However, it may also be appropriate to locate fitness equipment in other small parks if they form part of a fitness trail. When a playground is due for upgrading or refurbishment, the opportunity to install fitness equipment in association with the playground should be considered.

Appendix 2 – '*Assessment of Parks Suitable to Accommodate Fitness Equipment*' analyses the suitability of various parks in North Sydney to accommodate fitness equipment. The results are shown in **Table 2** following, in priority order from 1 – 3, with 1 being the highest priority.

Table 2 – Priority Parks & Reserves for Fitness Equipment

Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
Anderson Park	Blues Point Reserve	Anzac Park
Berry Island Reserve	Brightmore Reserve	Cammeray Park
Bradfield Park	Sawmillers Reserve	Carradah Park
Brennan Park	Watt Park	
Fred Hutley Reserve		

3.8.2 Skateparks

ABS census data indicates that youth participation in activities such as skateboarding and scootering now outnumbers participation in more traditional, organised sport, with up to 21 per cent of Australian young people estimated to engage in skating.

While there is some risk associated with skateboarding and scootering, research around children's play suggests that risk aversion and the phenomenon of 'cotton wool kids' have greater adverse impacts on child development and resilience. Considerable research challenges the negative stereotypes often associated with skateparks, finding that young people who use them engage in a range of social behaviours and gain valuable life skills.

While Council does not currently have plans to construct a new skatepark, if and when one is considered, the key criteria set out below will be used to determine a park's suitability to accommodate a skatepark:

- Overall size of the park
- Location of the park (in relation to residential properties and public transport)
- Presence of complementary facilities (seats, picnic tables, public amenities, drinking fountains etc)
- Community support

The benefits and opportunities that skateparks offer to members of the North Sydney community (refer section 2.7.2) must be weighed against the issues of noise impact on surrounding residential areas and the community's desire to reduce rather than increase the amount of 'hard' landscaping in parks and reserves.

3.9 Playground Improvement Works

The following playgrounds projects have been undertaken since the preparation of the previous Playgrounds Plan of Management in 2016. Carrying out these projects has directly and significantly contributed to improving Council's playgrounds asset.

- Installation of a new public amenities block adjacent to the Brightmore Reserve Trike Track and Playground (2016)
A sympathetically designed, low-key amenities block with baby-change facilities and access for all was installed in a tucked away location adjacent to the extremely popular Brightmore Reserve trike track and playground.
- Carousel Replacement Program (2016/17)
High levels of use and many moving parts mean that carousels often wear out ahead of other playground items. Their popularity and capacity to accommodate many children at once means their timely replacement is warranted. Carousels in St Leonards Park, Fred Hutley Reserve and St. Thomas' Rest Park were all replaced.

Watt Park Playground Refurbishment (2016)

Upgrading this popular local playground included refurbishing the roundabout and spring boat as well as installing new slides, swings and an arched climbing frame to replace worn equipment. Amendments to the Australian Standards for playgrounds allowed more equipment to be installed within the existing playground footprint.



Watt Park Playground – a tunnel slide replaced the original open slide

- Hodgson's Lookout Playground Refurbishment (2016)

This local playground at the end of Kurraba Road, Neutral Bay has an English-garden character. Popular items were refurbished or replaced with new, similar items and several new items added, all within the existing softfall area.



Hodgson's Lookout Playground – Neutral Bay

- Forsyth Park – New Playground (2017)

The new playground in Forsyth Park is an inclusive space that caters to a diverse age and ability range. Equipment includes a double flying fox, a ground level roundabout that can accommodate a wheelchair, an all-access seesaw and a giant basket swing. New fitness equipment is positioned to allow users to supervise children at play.

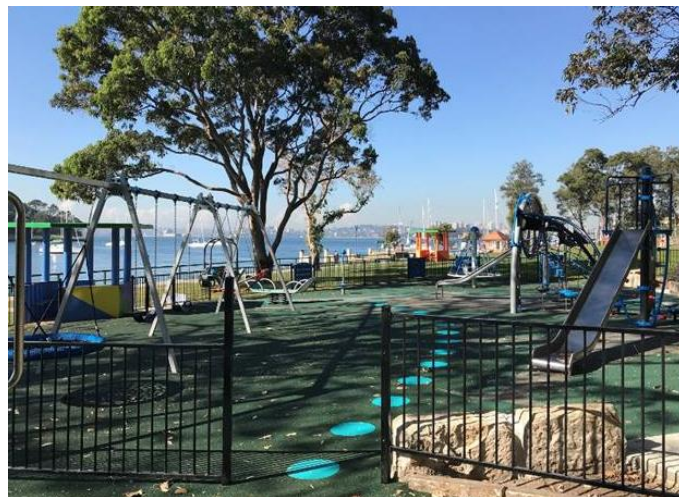
The playground blends into the surrounding landscape and features extensive gardens of aromatic plants and advanced native trees edged with recycled sandstone. A winding pathway provides accessibility between the upper and lower levels as well as connection to the nearby public amenities.



Forsyth Park Playground – many play items are accessible to all

- Kesterton Park Playground Upgrading (2018)

After 15 years, this popular harbourfront playground had become very worn and was due for a major upgrading. The new playground features a custom-designed, sculptural climb & slide structure, a spinning pyramid and a massive triple-bay swing set with many different swing seats. The playground has patterned rubber undersurfacing with a maritime ‘whale’ theme and activity panels are incorporated into the low fencing. The playground was already well-shaded, and the existing gardens have been revamped to provide a relaxed landscape setting. A new outdoor fitness facility adjoins the playground.



Kesterton Park Playground – fully fenced with harbour views

- Brennan Park Playground Upgrade (2018)

The playground is set beneath the canopy of a majestic fig tree with a natural sandstone embankment and heritage garden backdrop. Upgrading work expanded the playground to include more swings, an arched climber, a traditional carousel and a handball space while retaining the existing character and the daisy motif. Much of the new equipment was sited in shade cast from a fig tree planted when the playground was last upgraded in 1999.



Brennan Park Playground

- Warringa Park Playground Upgrade (2019)

Refurbishment of this shady playground has increased play value and improved accessibility, making it more inclusive. A new, custom-designed, structure provides a fully accessible circuit, and new play items include junior and senior slides, a cubby house, a free-standing spinning ride, a spring mounted jeep, a free-form cable climber and swings.

Park furniture was upgraded, and repositioned, new planting was added, and a new fence separates the playground from the rest of the park. A new pathway links the playground to Kurraba Road.



Warringa Park Playground – fully fenced and a delightfully shady landscaped setting

St. Thomas' Rest Park Playground Refurbishment (2020)

Refurbishment of much-loved play items and the addition of a suite of new play items means this playground now offers a perfect balance between the old and new. The existing carousel was replaced with a wheelchair accessible version, and the train engine was replaced, and an accessible carriage was added. Other items that make the playground more inclusive include a new seesaw, swings and an in-ground trampoline.

Original play items that have been retained and refurbished including the critter climber, the rocket rockers and the main slide and deck structure. The rubber safety surfacing has been replaced and expanded to incorporate a 'Twister' game and the old picnic tables have been replaced with new timber-look furniture. The extensive playground gardens are now more densely planted, and the old bubbler has been replaced with a filtered water drinking station with bottle refill option.



St Thomas' Rest Park Playground is now more inclusive

- Sirius Street Playground Upgrading – 2020

The playground capitalises on the sloping topography and the deeply shaded garden setting. Inclusive items including an all-access swing, a multi-person carriage rocker, a spinning cable pyramid and a custom designed cubby space with a talk-tube are concentrated at street level.

The steep slope accommodates an embankment slide, a scramble net and sandstone steps. The playground retains its maritime theme and incorporates a ship's bollard, pier

post and a sandstone pelican sculpture. The leafy setting offers new seating, an accessible bubbler with bottle refill station and a new deck and lookout.



Sirius Street Playground –accessible activities feature at street-level

3.9.1 Future Playground Projects

Future planned playground works, in accordance with the Playgrounds Methodology 2015 are as follows:

- Grasmere Children's Park
- Merret Playground (Waverton Park)
- Fred Hutley Reserve
- Prior Avenue Reserve
- St Leonards Park (note: this playground project will be undertaken in accordance with the ongoing implementation of the St Leonards Park Landscape Master Plan)

A new Playgrounds Methodology is now needed to guide future playground upgrading and construction works in North Sydney. This work is scheduled for late 2021. Once complete, this new document will provide the list of future playgrounds projects to be undertaken during the life of this Plan of Management.

3.10 Playground Funding

Playgrounds in North Sydney generally have a lifespan of between 10 and 20 years, thus there is an ongoing need for funding to upgrade and refurbish our existing playground stock. This Plan of Management identifies playgrounds scheduled for refurbishment in coming years, and the forthcoming Playgrounds Methodology document will identify others.

Playground upgrading and refurbishment projects (along with any new playground projects) then proceed in order of identified priority, according to available funding. In order to obtain an equitable share of government funding for the residents of North Sydney, and to facilitate timely playground upgrades of maximum quality and play value, Council keenly applies for all available grants.

3.10.1 Everyone Can Play (ECP) Grant Program

The NSW government's ECP grant program currently supports NSW Council's to refurbish and build inclusive playspaces to ensure that people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds can play.

Inclusive playspaces are defined as those that ‘*invite people of all ages, abilities and cultures to come together*’. They are further described as easy to access, easy to move around, providing a range of play options and challenges, and having appropriate facilities in a comfortable environment that encourage everyone to stay as long as they choose.

3.10.2 Eligibility

Grant funding (up to \$75,000 for refurbishing existing playgrounds and up to \$300,000 for new playgrounds) must be matched dollar for dollar with cash funding by Council and must align with three principles of ECP; ‘*Can I get there? Can I play? and Can I stay?*’. These principles are designed to promote thinking for more inclusive playspaces across NSW. In addition, Greater Sydney-based projects are required to meet a tree planting quota directly linked to the funding received at the rate of one tree for every \$5,000 of funding.

North Sydney faces some unusual challenges regarding eligibility. Council has had an ongoing program of planting shade trees in and around playgrounds since the mid-1990’s, hence most of our playgrounds now offer excellent natural shade cover. In fact, the recently upgraded Sirius Street Playground already had 100% canopy cover and no opportunity for additional tree planting. Other playgrounds that are not as well-shaded, are deliberately this way, generally due to the presence of scenic views through the playgrounds from adjacent residential areas. In many of North Sydney’s playgrounds, the limited opportunities for additional tree planting necessarily limit our ability to access grant funding.

It is also worth noting that most of North Sydney’s playgrounds (particularly the district playgrounds) already have many inclusive and accessible features, as these elements have been a key consideration in our playground design and upgrading program for many years. Future improvements to accessibility and inclusion are therefore likely to be reasonably subtle. It is often playgrounds with current low levels of inclusion and proposals of ‘show-stopping’ elements that attract funding.

4.0 **Basis for Management**

4.1 Philosophical Basis for the Plan of Management

The Playgrounds Plan of Management guides the future use, development and management of playgrounds and associated facilities in the North Sydney area. Council's playgrounds are important recreational resources and places of social interaction not just for kids, but for parents, carers and other members of the community. Playground management seeks to ensure all playgrounds in North Sydney are inviting, exciting, inclusive, challenging, and most of all, that they bring joy to the people who visit them.

4.2 Core Values and Management Objectives

4.2.1 Core Values

The following core values describe the most significant and important qualities of North Sydney's playgrounds. These values must be considered when future management objectives, strategies and actions are formulated to ensure their protection.

Social/Community

- Council's playgrounds are community hubs, encouraging interaction between peers and between the generations
- As population numbers grow and density increases, the importance of Council's playgrounds as venues for outdoor social gatherings and occasions also increases

Recreational

- Playgrounds provide children with valuable outdoor recreational opportunities; allowing them to explore and learn through play
- Ancillary facilities including seats, picnic tables, outdoor gym equipment and shade trees allow other members of the community to enjoy the playground environments
- Council's playgrounds offer a range of different play experiences and challenges to suit children of various ages and abilities
- Playgrounds give children the opportunity to burn energy, gain confidence, experience challenge and to interact with other children

Nature & Aesthetic Qualities

- Council's playgrounds are designed to complement the character of the park in which they are located. Colours, types of equipment and landscaping styles are all carefully selected to reflect the surrounding environment, be it foreshore, bushland or a historical landscape
- Council aims to provide outdoor environments for children's recreation that are not only appealing to children, but are also attractive to parents, carers and other community members
- Where possible, playgrounds are shaded by mature trees which provide scenic value, environmental benefits, seasonal variation and attractive flowers, bark and foliage
- Council's playgrounds allow our primarily urban community to experience nature; children can touch trees, flowers and the dirt beneath their feet, and they can look up and see the sky and feel the wind

4.2.2 *Management Objectives*

The following broad management objectives are based on:

- Legislative requirements
 - The values and assets of Council's playgrounds
 - Identified community needs and expectations
- To manage the playgrounds in accordance with the North Sydney Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028, the *LG Act*, the *CLM Act* and the *NT Act*
 - To ensure all uses of the land are appropriate; that they comply with the purpose of the land reservation (public recreation), and accord with its zoning under LEP 2013 (RE1 Public Recreation) and with its categorisation under the *LG Act*
 - To provide and maintain high quality recreation facilities that meet the needs and expectations of the community based on identified needs and within budget
 - To provide a variety of fun, challenging and inclusive play experiences that hold the interest of children primarily aged between two and twelve years
 - To provide new playgrounds that are custom designed to suit the park or reserve in which they are sited
 - To provide ancillary facilities such as seats, picnic tables, drinking fountains, BBQ's and shady lawn areas that complement recreational activities and add to user enjoyment and experience
 - To provide complementary facilities such as outdoor fitness equipment in or close to selected playgrounds
 - To provide playgrounds that are environmentally sustainable with suitably durable and cost-effective materials and processes
 - To ensure all playgrounds are accessible to the general community
 - To provide for public safety
 - To ensure all items of play equipment, under surfacing material etc conform to Australian Standards and guidelines
 - To continue to upgrade and refurbish existing playgrounds and ancillary facilities in accordance with Council's Playgrounds Methodology document
 - To take a consistent approach to management of playgrounds and to maintain them to an acceptable standard
 - To improve environmental sustainability by choosing appropriate construction materials and methods, carrying out proactive maintenance to maximise the useful life of playground and by recycling appropriate play and ancillary items
 - To ensure this Plan of Management is flexible and able to evolve with changing community needs and attitudes

These objectives have been used in the subsequent management issues to guide policy development and formulation of the action plan.

5.0 **Policy, Implementation and Performance**

The management framework outlined in this document is consistent with the anticipated availability of resources and anticipated community trends. The priority ratings outlined on the following pages may be modified if special circumstances arise.

Codes used to define priorities in the ‘Priority’ section of the Matrix:

ST	Action completed within 2 years
MT	Action completed in 2 – 4 years
LT	Action completed after 4 years
O	(Ongoing) – Action will occur throughout the life of the Plan of Management
C	(Commenced) – Action has started

5.1 MATRIX

PLAY EQUIPMENT AND ASSOCIATED FEATURES

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Play Equipment	To provide a variety of playgrounds that together meet the recreational needs of children between the ages of two and 12 in North Sydney	Manage Council's playground stock to ensure playgrounds provide a diversity of recreational opportunities	Council's 33 playgrounds are generally well-distributed throughout the Council area. They offer visitors a choice (sun/shade, small/larger, local/district and appropriate play experiences according to a child's ability and capability). Parents and carers are encouraged to read Council's Playgrounds Brochure: ' <i>A Place to Play</i> ', to determine which playgrounds best suit their needs	O	Council's playgrounds continue to offer a range of play opportunities	
		Ensure all playgrounds in North Sydney are unique and provide different experiences for the children using them	Playgrounds are custom designed, in-house, to suit the site	O	Playgrounds hold children's attention	
		Ensure all playgrounds in North Sydney feature some inclusive elements	Basket swings are an example of inclusive equipment that caters to all ages and abilities, allowing several children of varying ability to use the swing together Generally, the larger the playground, the more likely it is to contain inclusive items of play equipment as well as undersurfacing and ancillary facilities	O	All playgrounds provide inclusive elements	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
		Provide items of play equipment that accommodate many users at one time and that encourage interaction amongst users of all abilities and capabilities, where feasible	Basket swings and in-ground carousels are examples of inclusive playground equipment	O	Appropriate equipment installed in playgrounds	
		Separate junior equipment from more senior equipment where possible	This reduces the potential for conflict	O	Playgrounds design considers creating separate play rooms where possible	
		Consider demographic trends when upgrading playgrounds or creating new playgrounds	Playgrounds encourage physical exercise and social interaction and are particularly important in North Sydney area where many children do not have their own backyards. Demographic information may influence overall design, particularly of local playgrounds	O	Level of community satisfaction with playgrounds gauged from feedback	
		Ensure all existing playgrounds are compliant with Australian Standards	Relevant Standards are: AS 4685:2014 Parts 1-6 & 11; Playground equipment and Surfacing (General, Swings, Slides, Cableways, Carousels, Rocking Equipment, Spacenets) AS 4422:2016 Playground surfacing - Specifications, requirements and test method AS 4685:2017 Part 0; Playground equipment and surfacing: Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation	O	Playgrounds comply with relevant Australian Standards	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
	To provide a network of playgrounds that complement the character of the park or reserve in which they are situated	Consider factors including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - colour schemes - construction materials - scale and bulk - vegetation - landscape materials (edging, seating etc) - views and vistas 	North Sydney's parks and reserves occupy a variety of attractive landscape settings including foreshore, heritage and bushland	O	New playground equipment and associated landscaping is sympathetic to the existing character of the park or reserve	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Ancillary Items	To provide appropriate ancillary items in association with all playgrounds	Provide ancillary items in all playgrounds in North Sydney commensurate with the significant of the playground (local, district or regional)	Location of ancillary items should consider sightlines to the various parts of the playground, access by people of all abilities, shade and scenic views	O	User satisfaction gauged from feedback	
		Provide seating in association with all playgrounds	Seating options include standard park benches (with and without backs), picnic tables, tree seats and informal seating such as sandstone walls and boulders	O	All playgrounds have some form of seating	
		Provide drinking fountains in appropriate playgrounds	All new drinking fountains installed in playgrounds are accessible to all, and in larger parks, many also offer filtered water and bottle refill stations. Older-style drinking fountains will be replaced with accessible units in accordance with the ongoing playground upgrading and refurbishment works	O	Drinking fountains provided as appropriate	
		Site ancillary items in appropriate locations in and around playgrounds	Consider sightlines, access for all, shade and scenic viewss	O	User satisfaction gauged from feedback	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Complementary Facilities	To provide facilities that complement playgrounds	Consider the need and feasibility of providing appropriate complementary facilities when playground projects are undertaken	Complementary facilities include BBQ's, public amenities, fitness equipment, picnic shelters etc. These are most likely to be considered in parks of district or regional significance, in the interests of creating social/family spaces. Complementary facilities are not essential, but their presence makes a park more desirable as a destination for a long stay visit	O	Need and feasibility of providing complementary facilities considered when playground projects are undertaken	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Fitness Equipment	To provide additional fitness equipment in parks and reserves to meet identified community needs	Install fitness equipment in Council's parks and reserves in accordance with priorities determined in this Plan of Management (refer Appendix 2)	Highest priority (Priority 1) locations include Brennan Park, Anderson Park, Fred Hutley Reserve, Bradfield Park and Berry Island Reserve	ST-LT	New fitness equipment installed as per identified priorities	Appendix 2

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Other Recreation Facilities	To provide other recreation facilities (in addition to playgrounds) for young people in North Sydney	If they arise, investigate opportunities to provide skate and scootering facilities in a park in North Sydney	Assessment of potential parks will be as per section 3.8.2 of this Plan of Management, considering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Park location (re public transport and residential properties) - Size of park - Presence of complementary facilities - Community support 	O	Opportunities assessed as they arise	
		Pursue the preferred option to develop a skate and scootering park if one is assessed as being needed, desired, appropriate and viable	Provision of skate and similar facilities is undertaken by Council's Community and Library Services Division whose staff work closely with youth people in North Sydney, providing them with appropriate facilities, services and support	O	Opportunity pursued if appropriate	
		Investigate opportunities to provide other recreation facilities as they arise, and pursue desirable and feasible options, as per available budgets	These include hand ball courts, basketball hoops, backboards and ½ courts, trike tracks and outdoor ping pong tables Assessment procedure will be as for skate and scootering facilities	O	Opportunities pursued as appropriate	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Fencing	To provide a mix of fenced and unfenced playgrounds in North Sydney	Assess the need to fence new playgrounds on a case-by-case basis	While fences are not always desirable as they disturb the visual continuity and impact on the ability of children to enjoy the whole park, full or partial fencing may be appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If the playground is beside a busy road or on the waterfront - If the playground is naturally almost fully enclosed - If there is potential conflict with other park users (for example in popular dog-walking parks and near sportsfields) 	O	Need for fencing assessed by Council staff as part of planning and design of new playgrounds	
		Assess the need to fence existing playgrounds on request, or if circumstances change and issues arise	Circumstances such as changes to road and traffic flows or significant population increases in an area may mean fencing is needed	O	Need for fencing assessed, upon request	
		Consider opportunities to incorporate play panels and other activities into fencing where fencing is required	This adds to the overall play value of the site	O	Play panels incorporated into fencing where feasible	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Undersurfacing	To provide appropriate undersurfacing to all playgrounds in North Sydney	Ensure all playgrounds have appropriate undersurfacing material that complies with current Standards and provides a safe play environment	Australian/New Zealand Standards relate to impact attenuation and fall zones AS 4422:2016 Playground surfacing - Specifications, requirements and test method	O	Appropriate undersurfacing material installed under all playground equipment	
		Determine the most appropriate undersurfacing materials when existing playgrounds are upgraded or refurbished or when new playgrounds are developed	Consider: - Potential to make equipment and ancillary items more accessible, and to improve the overall inclusiveness of the playground - Cost (rubber undersurfacing is significantly more expensive than organic softfall material) - Protection of existing trees and vegetation - Ability of the material to blend with the surrounding parkland and create a 'natural' environment	O	Appropriate undersurfacing material selected	
		Select and install appropriate edging in new playgrounds and when existing playgrounds are upgraded or refurbished	Playground edging contains the organic softfall and often delineates the extent of the playground Well-designed edging facilitates maintenance, including mowing of adjacent grassed areas Typical types of edging include sandstone, timber, formed rubber, concrete and brick In some cases, playgrounds may be edged by pathways or gardens	O	Appropriate edging selected and installed	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Pathways	To improve access to Council's playgrounds	Consider the need to provide or improve pathways within parks that lead to playgrounds when playgrounds are upgraded	Making access easier for people with mobility impairments and those pushing prams makes the playground more inclusive. Factors to consider include topography, distance and overall project budget (provision of pathways should not significantly compromise play value)	O	Provision of access pathways considered	
	To provide appropriate pathways within Council's playgrounds	Consider likely circulation routes and the location of play items and ancillary facilities when siting pathways in playgrounds	Pathways should avoid forced movement zones and can help separate play areas for young children from those more suited to older children	O	Relevant factors considered	
		Consider choice of materials for pathways in and around playgrounds	Rubber pathways allow easy access for all but can still meet impact attenuation requirements. Concrete or asphalt pathways can double as a trike track. Any pathway in a fall zone must meet the Australian standards for impact attenuation	O	Most appropriate materials selected	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Landscaping	To integrate all playgrounds with the park or reserve in which they are situated	Carry out appropriate new landscape work in association with the upgrading or refurbishment of existing playgrounds and the construction of new playgrounds	Landscaping works are an integral component of North Sydney Council's playground environments	O	All new playgrounds feature appropriate landscape work	
		Use hard and soft landscape elements to perform a variety of functions in playgrounds	Elements include trees, shrubs and groundcovers as well as boulders, sandstone walling and edging, paths, tree seats and earthworks/mounding	O	Landscape features used in playgrounds where appropriate	
		Use landscape elements to direct and control movement and to create different play 'rooms'	For example, paths, strategically sited boulders, mounding and mass planting	O	Landscape elements control movement where feasible	
		Use landscape elements to provide seating	For example, low retaining walls, large boulders, seats around trees	O	Playgrounds contain 'natural' seating where possible	
		Use landscape elements to create a visual (and physical) barrier	For example, trees and shrubs can screen unattractive views and even reduce roadway noise. Earth mounding and mass planting can create a physical barrier	O	Visual barriers created by landscape elements where possible	
		Use landscape elements to provide shade	Canopy trees and large shrubs provide shade for playground visitors	O	Vegetation provides shade wherever possible	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
		Use existing site landscape features when upgrading or refurbishing existing playgrounds or when creating new playgrounds	For example, the embankment slide in Sirius Street Reserve takes advantage of the steeply sloping nature of this site	O	New work in playgrounds takes advantage of existing site features	
	To use planting that complements and enhances the play environment	Select plants that stimulate the senses of all playground users	Consider smells, colours, textures and seasonal variations as these can be appreciated by people of all ages and abilities	O	Plant selection takes sensory considerations into account	
		Select plants that complement the existing style of planting in the park or reserve	Native plants are appropriate in a bushland setting, while more formal, plantings may suit parks with a strong European heritage character	O	New planting complements existing planting	
		Select plants that are appropriate for a children's playground	Avoid plants that may be poisonous, excessively prickly or fragile, and tree species that are prone to dropping limbs	O	All new planting is appropriate	

AMENITY AND CHARACTER

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Siting	To site all new playgrounds in the most appropriate location within a park	Carry out a thorough site analysis prior to siting a new playground	Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location of existing shade trees - Accessibility from surrounding footpaths and/or roads - Existing circulation routes through the park - Location of existing ancillary and/or complementary facilities - Scenic views into and through the park 	O	Site analysis undertaken by Council staff	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Shade	To use trees to provide shade at playgrounds, where possible	Consider shade cast by existing trees when siting new play equipment and ancillary facilities including seats and picnic tables		O	Existing trees provide shade where possible	
		Plant additional trees to provide future shade over playgrounds and ancillary facilities when upgrading or refurbishing existing playgrounds and installing new playgrounds	Advanced trees are planted where possible to provide immediate benefits. Note: some playgrounds, such as Sirius Street Reserve, are already fully shaded	O	Additional trees planted in appropriate locations, if required	
		Plant appropriate tree species in and around playgrounds	Consider: - Character of park - Deciduous or evergreen? - Anticipated longevity of tree - Canopy size and shape at maturity	O	All new tree planting is appropriate.	
		Consider the likely future impact of new tree plantings on scenic views into and through the park/playground	In some parks it may not be possible to provide full shade, particularly where views into and through the park/playground are significant	O	All new tree planting considers views	
	To use built structures to provide shade at playgrounds where required	Install shade structures in locations where existing trees do not currently provide adequate shade	Natural shade is ideal, however, where trees do not currently provide adequate shade, built shade structures are appropriate Most built shade structures are temporary, when new trees provide adequate shade, they will be removed	O	Temporary shade structures installed if required	
		Consider the likely impact of installing a shade structure on scenic views	In some parks it may not be possible to provide full shade, particularly where views into and through the park are significant	O	Location of built shade structures considers views	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Dogs and Playgrounds	To minimise the opportunity for conflicts between children and dogs in and around playgrounds	Publicise restrictions and responsibilities relating to dogs near playgrounds	Council's brochure, 'Owning Dogs and Cats in North Sydney' provides useful information Relevant signage is located near major playground entrances	O	Relevant information is easily available	
		Update Council's playgrounds brochure: 'A Place to Play' to incorporate information on dogs near playgrounds	Many families who visit playgrounds also have a dog, so the playgrounds brochure will advise then on the relevant regulations	ST	Playgrounds brochure updated	
		Incorporate information about dogs near playgrounds into playground naming signage	The sign at Brennan Park near the playground (pictured in section 3.2) is a good example of sympathetic and appropriate signage. Signage should be located near major playground entrances	ST-O	New playground naming signs incorporate regulations concerning dogs	
		Enforce restrictions and responsibilities of those walking dogs near playgrounds	Dogs are not permitted within 10 metres of play equipment. Dog's off-leash in public places must be under their handler's control	O	Reduction in number of complaints regarding inappropriate dog behaviour near playgrounds	<i>Companion Animals Act 1998</i> Local Companion Animal Management Plan NSC
		Patrol parks containing playgrounds to ensure compliance with the above action	Patrols are carried out by Council Rangers	O	Regular Ranger patrols	

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Access to Playgrounds & Circulation	To control vehicular access into playgrounds	Prohibit and prevent general vehicular access to playground areas	A private vehicle requiring access to a park or reserve must obtain permission from Council	O	General vehicular access to playground areas prohibited	
		Allow service and emergency vehicles to enter playgrounds	Access is required for maintenance. Vehicle gates allow access to Council's fully fenced playgrounds	O	Access to playgrounds provided for service and emergency vehicles	
	To improve the accessibility of playgrounds in North Sydney's for all the community	Improve access for all when playground upgrades or refurbishments occur		O	All playground upgrades or refurbishment projects improve access for all	
		Provide accessible paths to connect external pathways with playgrounds	If feasible, work is carried out when playgrounds are upgraded or refurbished or when new playgrounds are constructed	O	Accessible paths constructed where appropriate	
	To provide safe and accessible circulation systems in playgrounds	Assess opportunities to improve circulation systems for all users when playgrounds are upgraded or refurbished or when new playgrounds are constructed	Consider location of accessible items, likely desire lines and movement patterns	O	Appropriate work to improve accessibility carried out	

LANDUSE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Playground Upgrading Program	To continue to upgrade and refurbish North Sydney's playgrounds in priority order	Continue to implement Council's program of upgrading existing playgrounds as set out in Council's Playgrounds Methodology document	Refurbishment offers the chance to increase the amount of equipment and ancillary facilities, to increase the size of the playground (where appropriate), and to make existing playgrounds more inclusive. Appendix 5: <i>Definitions</i> explains the difference between playground 'upgrading' and 'refurbishment'	O	Playgrounds are upgraded and refurbished in order of established priority	Playgrounds Methodology 2015 NSC
		Incorporate the principles of universal design, as set out in the 'Everyone Can Play' guidelines, into all playground projects	This will ensure playgrounds are as inclusive as possible (within budgetary and size constraints)			Everyone Can Play Guidelines NSW Govt
		Refurbish Grasmere Children's Park		ST	New work completed on time and to budget	Playgrounds Methodology 2015 NSC
		Upgrade Fred Hutley Reserve Playground		ST	New work completed on time and to budget	Playgrounds Methodology 2015 NSC
		Upgrade Merret Playground		ST	New work completed on time and to budget	Playgrounds Methodology 2015 NSC
		Refurbish Prior Ave Reserve Playground		MT	New work completed on time and to budget	Playgrounds Methodology 2015 NSC

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
		Refurbish Lodge Road Playground		MT	New work completed on time and to budget	
		Develop a new Playgrounds Methodology to guide future playground upgrading, refurbishment and construction works in North Sydney	Once complete, this new Methodology will provide the list of future playground projects to be carried out during the life of this Plan of Management	ST	New Playgrounds Methodology developed	
		Carry out future playground upgrades and refurbishments in accordance with the new Playgrounds Methodology to be developed in 2021	Note: the existing 2015 Playgrounds Methodology notes the need to refurbish and expand the playground in St Leonards Park. This playground project will be undertaken in accordance with the ongoing implementation of the St Leonards Park Landscape Master Plan	O	Future playgrounds projects in accordance with new Playgrounds Methodology	
		Apply for grants to upgrade and refurbish Council's playgrounds and to construct new playgrounds when opportunities arise	Most state government grants are currently linked to the 'Everyone Can Play' initiative, and funding is dependent upon Council's making the new or upgraded/refurbished playgrounds significantly more inclusive. Funding also comes with a requirement to plant trees (1 tree for every \$5,000 of funding) which can be challenging in an area with as many existing trees in playgrounds as North Sydney	O	Grant applications prepared when opportunities arise	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Creating New Playgrounds	To provide new playgrounds to 'fill the gaps' in Council's existing playground network and meet community needs	Develop new playgrounds in suitable locations in accordance with Council's Playgrounds Methodology 2015	The Playgrounds Methodology identified Forsyth Park and Cammeray Park as priority locations for new playgrounds (Forsyth Park playground was constructed in 2018)	CP	Potential locations for new playgrounds identified	Playgrounds Methodology 2015 NSC
		Incorporate the principles of universal design, as set out in the 'Everyone Can Play' guidelines, into all new playground projects	This will ensure playgrounds are as inclusive as possible (within budgetary and size constraints)	O	All new playgrounds consider the guidelines	Everyone Can Play Guidelines NSW Govt
		Prepare a design for a new playground in Cammeray Park	There is an opportunity to install play items to complement existing recreation facilities in the park including the skate plaza, synthetic sports field and other sports courts	MT-LT	Design prepared and community consultation undertaken	Playgrounds Methodology 2015 NSC
		Construct a new playground in Cammeray Park	Note that the timing of this project is dependent on the state government's Western Harbour Tunnel/Beaches Link project, as Cammeray Park will be significantly impacted by this work	LT	New playground constructed on time and to budget	Playgrounds Methodology 2015 NSC
		Assess the need for additional new playgrounds when the new Playgrounds Methodology is developed		ST	New Playgrounds Methodology developed	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Database	To manage Council's playground resource in an appropriate and accountable manner	Use Council's in-house database to manage Council's playground stock	The database stores information regarding play equipment, manufacturer's, maintenance regimes, dates of maintenance inspections, and actions taken regarding repairs and replacement of parts. Information is entered by relevant Council staff	O	Information in the database is kept up to date	
		Train Council staff to use the database as required	Training is ongoing, according to staff turnover	O	Council staff are using database effectively as a management tool	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Maintenance	To maintain all play equipment, ancillary facilities and associated landscapes to appropriate standards to meet community needs and expectations and commensurate with Council resources	Carry out regular cyclical maintenance to appropriate standards in all Council playgrounds	Monthly maintenance inspections look at play equipment, undersurfacing, ancillary facilities as well as landscaping and the health of trees associated with the playgrounds	O	Maintenance programs implemented on time	North Sydney Council Delivery Program
		Carry out additional maintenance in playgrounds affected by seasonal issues including seed and berry drop	Additional maintenance in affected playgrounds is scheduled at relevant times	O	Additional maintenance carried out	
		Input the results of maintenance inspections into Council's database, and schedule required maintenance work		O	Playgrounds are maintained in good condition	
		Undertake emergency repairs, removals or other additional maintenance work as required	Council staff are pro-active, identifying problems and responding to requests from the public	O	Speed of repair work	
		Continue to analyse funds spent on playgrounds maintenance over past years to determine increases over time, and trends	This allows playground managers to determine current and likely future maintenance budgets	O	Analysis complete and recommendations made	
		Review and revise playground maintenance budget annually	Costs associated with maintaining playgrounds have substantially increased in recent years	O	Maintenance budget amended if required	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Environmental Sustainability	To improve the environmental sustainability of playground facilities in North Sydney	Choose appropriate construction materials and methods	Play value, safety and durability of playgrounds must be considered, as should the whole-of-lifetime cost of the playground	O	Construction methods are appropriate	
		Research and trial more sustainable products as opportunities arise	Council staff stay up to date with latest developments through programs of training and seminars run by peak playground bodies	O	Ongoing program of research/ trialling	
		Carry out proactive maintenance to maximise the useful life of existing playgrounds		O	Appropriate maintenance undertaken	
		Recycle as many play and other items as possible when upgrading and refurbishing playgrounds	Council tender and quotation documents require contractors to consider how this may be done. For example, the Rotary Overseas Recycled Playgrounds program involves removal shipping and reassembly of usable playgrounds components to Rotary Clubs in countries such Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Tanzania	O	Equipment and materials recycled where possible	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Safety and Risk Management	To identify, measure and manage potential hazards in a timely manner to minimise Council exposure to complaints, compensation claims and litigation	Continue to carry out an inspection program to identify and eliminate all potential hazards;	Refer Issue 'Maintenance'. The regular monthly maintenance inspections also function as risk assessment inspections	O	Inspection program implemented on time	
		Carry out maintenance and risk mitigation as required		O	Reduction in annual claims	
	To minimise the impact and incidence of vandalism in playgrounds	Carry out patrols of the playgrounds on a regular basis	Council Rangers carry out the patrols	O	Decrease in annual number of incidents	
		Remove all graffiti as soon as practicable	People are less likely to deface surfaces that are in an undamaged condition	O	Graffiti removed in a timely manner	
		Repair vandalised play equipment as soon as practicable or remove if damaged beyond repair		O	Equipment repaired or replaced in a timely manner	
	To ensure that staff are well trained and remain up to date with industry best practice	Maintain memberships of industry peak bodies and ensure information is disseminated to all staff involved in play	Australian standards are regularly updated and amended. It is important that staff are conversant with the latest industry requirements	O	NSC remains a member of relevant peak bodies	
		Send relevant staff to appropriate training courses, seminars and conferences		O	Relevant staff attend ongoing appropriate training	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Community Involvement	To provide opportunities for the community to be involved in the development of the Playgrounds Plan of Management	Encourage feedback by widely publicising the draft Plan of Management.	Stakeholders including Precinct Committees, pre-schools and schools receive direct notification when the draft Plan is on exhibition	O	Public exhibition of the draft Plan widely publicised	
		Ensure the Playgrounds Plan of Management is easily accessible	All Plans of Management are available on Council's website. Hard copies are available from Council on request	O	Plans of Management easily available	
	To provide opportunities for the community to be involved in new playground projects	Consult with stakeholders during the development of concept plans for playground upgrades, refurbishment or creation of new playgrounds	Consultation methods include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Posting concept plans in the relevant parks - Letterbox drops to nearby residences - Information and a feedback form on Council's website Concept plans are amended based on public responses where possible	O	Community satisfaction with the consultation process as gauged from feedback	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Information and Promotion	To publicise Council's network of playgrounds and to provide information for parents and carers visiting playgrounds	Update Council's playgrounds brochure ' <i>A Place to Play</i> ' regularly to keep information about North Sydney's playground stock current	This online brochure provides up-to-date information on each playground including location, type of equipment, access, fencing, availability of public toilets etc. It is amended regularly	O	Information is updated regularly	
		Revise and upgrade Council's playgrounds brochure ' <i>A Place to Play</i> ' to include information on dogs and playgrounds, smoking near playgrounds and expectations and responsibilities of parents and carers supervising children's play	The Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 stipulates that public playgrounds within 10 metres of children's play equipment are smoke-free	ST	Brochure is revised and upgraded to include required information	<i>Smoke-free Environment Act 2000</i>
	To promote the value of Council's playgrounds to the North Sydney community	Submit playground projects for relevant awards to achieve recognition for Council's approach to playground provision	Council aims to provide many smaller playgrounds that are easily accessible to the community, are visited regularly and represent excellent value for money. This approach has been recognised with recent awards from peak bodies including Parks & Leisure Australia and Kidsafe NSW	O	Submissions made for relevant awards programs	

Issue	Objective	Action	Comments	Priority	Performance Indicators	References
Monitoring of Management Systems	To review and update the Playgrounds PoM regularly	Review the Playgrounds PoM regularly, and comprehensively update the Plan after 5-10 years to conserve, maintain and enhance the values and character of North Sydney's playgrounds		O	PoM objectives and actions implemented. Relevance of the Plan of Management	

5.2 Implementing the Indicative Works Program

Council's Plans of Management identify clear objectives and directions for planning, resource management and maintenance of public open space. They inform the community about upcoming projects and works; not only clarifying what will be happening, but explaining why, and assigning priorities.

However, Plans of Management must also be flexible enough to respond to new opportunities and to changed circumstances and community needs. While significant shifts in policy or planning issues during the life of a Plan of Management are unlikely, it is possible that specific works or the order in which works are undertaken may vary.

New Opportunities
















Whenever possible, Council makes application for grant funding from relevant state and federal organisations. If an application is successful, Council may need to bring forward a project. There may also be instances where particular projects need to be delayed.

Change Circumstances and Community Needs

The process of reviewing and revising Council's Plans of Management is cyclical, and other significant studies completed 'between Plans' may identify actions and works that can appropriately jump ahead of existing Plan of Management actions. This is particularly appropriate when the study in question (for example a Recreation Needs Study) has been prepared with a very high level of community involvement. If the fast-tracked action is consistent with the core values and stated management objectives expressed in the relevant Plan of Management, this is justified. Council's new Playground Methodology document will set out future playground works.

5.3 INDICATIVE WORKS PROGRAM

Note: Works listed in the following table are proposed new projects only. Actions designated as ‘Ongoing’ in the Matrix section of the Plan are not listed here.

WORKS/ACTION	ST 2021 – 2024	MT 2024 – 2026	LT 2027 onwards
Refurbish the playground in Grasmere Children’s Park, Cremorne			
Upgrade the playground in Fred Hutley Reserve, Cammeray			
Upgrade Merrett Playground in Waverton Park, Waverton			
Refurbish the playground in Prior Avenue Reserve, Cremorne Point			
Refurbish the playground in Lodge Road Playground, Cremorne			
Prepare a new Playgrounds Methodology document			
Continue to refurbish existing playgrounds and create new playgrounds in accordance with Council’s new Playgrounds Methodology document			
Install fitness equipment in Brennan Park			
Install outdoor fitness equipment in Fred Hutley Reserve (in conjunction with playground upgrading)			
Install fitness equipment in Anderson Park			
Install fitness equipment in Bradfield Park			
Prepare a design for a new playground in Cammeray Park			
Construct a new playground in Cammeray Park			
Review the Playgrounds Plan of Management regularly			

6.0 Appendices and Supporting Material

6.1 Appendix 1 - Schedule of Land

The following parks and reserves all contain playgrounds.

The parcels of land listed in the 'Lot & DP Information' column contain the playground and are covered by the Playgrounds Plan of Management.

	Description	Street Address	Hierarchy	Ownership	Land Category (LG Act 1993)	Zoning (NSC LEP 2013)	Lot & DP Information (where applicable)
1	Berry Island Reserve Playground	Southern end of Shirley Road, Wollstonecraft	District	Crown	Park	RE1	Lot 1 DP 115701, Lots 2-3 DP 548178 (R58957)
2	Blues Point Reserve Playground	Southern end of Blues Point Road, McMahons Point	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 1007 DP 752067
3	Bradfield Park Playground	Alfred Street south, Milsons Point	District	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 1 DP 916460
4	Brightmore Reserve/Primrose Park Playground/Trike Track	Young Street, Cremorne	District	Crown & NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 1125 DP 752067, Lot 1 DP 171811
5	Brennan Park Playground	King Street, Wollstonecraft	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lots 2,3 & 4, SEC 7 DP 4038
6	Cahill Playground	Sophia Street, Crows Nest	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 2 DP 342920
7	Cremorne Reserve Playground	Milson Road, Cremorne Point	Local	Crown	Park	RE1/E2	Lot 7338 DP 1139892 (R39677)
8	Euroka Street Playground	Euroka Street, Waverton	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 100 DP 736798
9	Forsyth Park Playground	Montpelier Street, Neutral Bay	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lots 1, 4 & 6 DP 103911
10	Fred Hutley Reserve Playground	Hamilton Avenue, Cammeray	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 1 DP 449845
11	Grasmere Children's Park	Young Street, Cremorne	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 27 SEC 9 DP 975498
12	Grasmere Reserve Playground	Little Young Street, Cremorne	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 10 DP 873927
13	Green Park (Junior) Playground	Warwick Avenue, Cammeray	Local	Crown	Park	RE1	Lot 7138 DP 93723 (R.500179)
14	Green Park (Senior) Playground	Warwick Avenue, Cammeray	Local	Crown	Park	RE1	Lot 7138 DP 93723 (R.500179)
15	Hodgson's Lookout Playground	Kurraba Road, Neutral Bay	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lots 7 & 8 DP 17577
16	Ilbery Reserve Playground	Barry Street, Neutral Bay	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 1 DP 691162

	Description	Street Address	Hierarchy	Ownership	Land Category (LG Act 1993)	Zoning (NSC LEP 2013)	Lot & DP Information (where applicable)
17	Kesterton Park Playground	High Street, North Sydney	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 1 DP 12302
18	Lodge Road Playground	Cnr Lodge & Ellalong Roads, Cremorne	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lots 19-22 DP 10291
19	Mary French Reserve	Mil Mil Street, McMahon's Point	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 1 DP 775884
20	Merrett Playground	Woolcott Street, Waverton	Local	Crown	Park	RE1	Lot 1 DP 115703 (R500178)
21	Milson Park Playground	McDougall Street, Kirribilli	Local	Crown	Park	RE1	Lots 1-2 DP 909065, Lot 7331 DP 1158203 (R500180)
22	North Sydney Leisure Centre	Miller Street, North Sydney	Local	NSC	Park	SP2	Lot 2 DP 1101874
23	Phillips Street Playground	Phillips Street, Neutral Bay	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	NA
24	Prior Avenue Reserve Playground	Prior Avenue, Cremorne	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 1 DP 134111
25	Sirius Street Playground	Cnr Milson Road & Sirius Street, Cremorne Point	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	NA
26	St Leonards Park Playground	Miller Street, North Sydney	District	Crown	Park	RE1	Lot 7321 DP 1149783 (R89592)
27	St Thomas' Rest Park Playground	West Street, Cammeray	District	Commissioner for Main Roads		RE1	Lot 1 DP 774511
28	Tunks Park Playground	Brothers Avenue, Cammeray	District	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 13 DP 10001
29	Victoria Street Playground	Victoria Street, McMahon's Point	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 1 DP 85190
30	WH Brothers Memorial Reserve Playground	Fifth Avenue, Cremorne	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 1 DP 956185
31	Warringa Park Playground	Cnr Kurraba Road & Rawson Street, Neutral Bay	Local	Crown	Park	RE1	Lot 7361 DP 1168049 (R.500352)
32	Watt Park Playground	Lavender Crescent, Lavender Bay	Local	NSC	Park	RE1	Lot 1-2 DP 108816, Lot 1 DP 1118270
33	Wollstonecraft Railway Station Park Playground	Off Shirley Road, Wollstonecraft	Local	Rail Corporation NSW		SP2 Railway	NA

6.2 Appendix 2 – Assessment of Parks Suitable to Accommodate Fitness Equipment

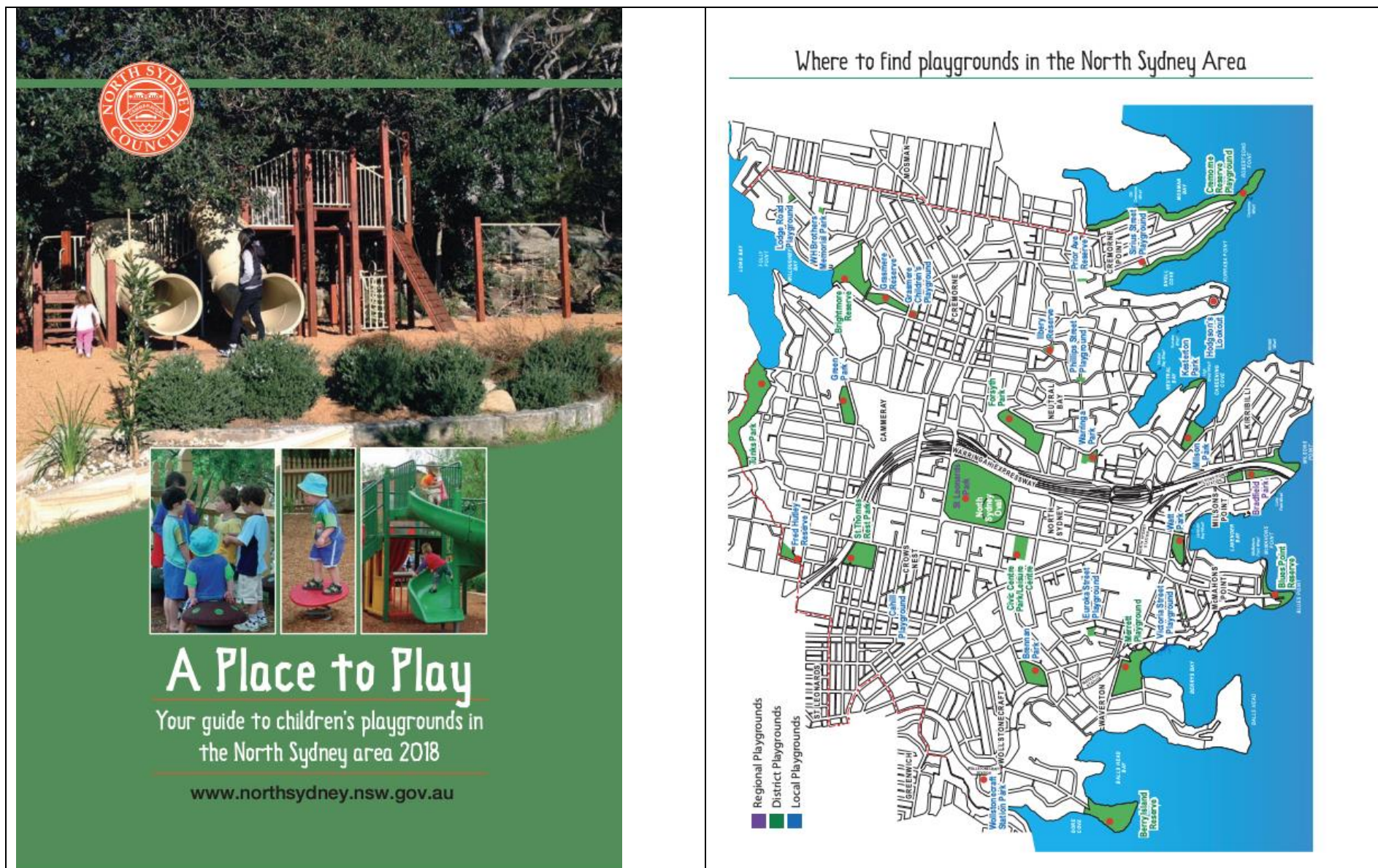
Park	Size	Other Park Facilities	Distribution	Anticipated Users	Site Features	Other Comments	Priority
Anderson Park	Medium/ Large	Sportsfield Public Amenities Foreshore location/views Cricket net Seating Shade	Could be part of a foreshore fitness trail connecting Kirribilli to Neutral Bay (facilities already exist in Kesterton Park)	Local residents. People using the foreshore walking trail	Flat, shady Existing foreshore path	Identified for fitness equipment in the Anderson Park PoM 2018	1
Anzac Park	Medium	Community garden Memorial/ tree planting	No fitness facilities nearby	Local residents. School children from adjacent Anzac Park Primary school already use this park for play	Flat, open site		3
Berry Island Reserve	Large	Large playground Bush track Public amenities BBQs Drinking fountain Shade	No fitness equipment nearby Fitness equipment would complement excellent range of facilities already in the reserve	Local residents. People bringing children to the playground. The reserve is a destination for people from further afield due to its location and range of facilities	Flat, some shade		1
Blues Point Reserve	Medium	Playground Seats Public amenities Foreshore location/ views Drinking fountain Shade	No fitness facilities nearby	Local residents. People bringing children to the playground. Visitors (who come to view the harbour, bridge and city)	Flat, some shade		2
Bradfield Park	Large	Playground Seats Public amenities Foreshore location/ views Drinking fountain Bike racks Shade	Fitness equipment would complement excellent range of facilities already in the park	Local residents. People bringing children to the playground. Visitors who are drawn by other park features including harbour views. The Park is part of the popular walk around Lavender Bay	Flat areas, some shade. Lots of space adjacent to the playground or on the foreshore. Transport hub		1

Park	Size	Other Park Facilities	Distribution	Anticipated Users	Site Features	Other Comments	Priority
Brennan Park	Medium	Playground Public amenities Seats Drinking fountain Shade	No fitness equipment nearby Fitness equipment would complement facilities in the park	Local residents. People bringing children to the playground.	Area off King St overlooking the playground and beside the footpath has been identified as preferred location	Community has requested fitness equipment on many occasions – even submitting a grant application (with Council's support) to the state govt (unsuccessful)	1
Brightmore Reserve	Medium / Large	Playground & trike track Public amenities Drinking fountain Bike racks Shade	No fitness equipment nearby Fitness equipment would complement excellent range of facilities already in the reserve	Local residents. The trike track and playground draw users from further afield (in cars)	Large, flat areas. Some shade	People regularly use the trees and other structures in the reserve for fitness activities	2
Cammeray Park	Large	Golf course Tennis courts Croquet courts Skate park Sportsfield Drinking fountain Bike racks Shade	Fitness equipment in nearby Green Park. Equipment in Cammeray could form part of a circuit with Green Park	Local residents. The Park is a destination for people from further afield due to other facilities including synthetic sports field, tennis/croquet courts, golf course and skate park	Large park with flat areas and some good shade.	No work will take place in this park until Northern Beaches Harbour Link project is complete	3
Carradah Park	Large	Seats Foreshore location/ views Shade	Facilities in adjacent Waverton Park. Could be part of a foreshore fitness trail around the Waverton Peninsula	Local residents. People walking and jogging around the foreshore. The Park is a destination due to its size, character and harbour views	Large park. Flat areas and some shade. Opportunities to site equipment so it does not impact views		3

Park	Size	Other Park Facilities	Distribution	Anticipated Users	Site Features	Other Comments	Priority
Fred Hutley Reserve	Small/ Medium	Playground Seats Drinking fountain Shade	No fitness equipment and few other parks or playgrounds in the area	Local residents and people bringing children to play	Shady space adjacent to play equipment,		1
Sawmillers Reserve	Medium	Seats Foreshore location/ views Small watercraft storage Shade Public jetty	Closest facilities are in Waverton Park (connected to Sawmillers Reserve via a combination of park and street-based links)	Local residents	Variety of suitable shady, flat areas, tucked back from the foreshore		2
Watt Park	Medium	Playground Public amenities Seats Drinking fountain Shade	No fitness facilities closeby	Local residents. People walking and jogging on the foreshore path around Lavender Bay. Also reachable by North Sydney CBD workers	Park is tucked behind railway viaduct, so equipment would not impact views. Park is very shady. Flat areas		2

Note: In addition to the above assessment method, the opportunity and suitability to install outdoor fitness equipment should be considered each time a Council playground is due for upgrading or refurbishment. Available playground budget must also be considered; fitness equipment is an ancillary facility and the primary consideration for designated playground projects must be play value.

6.3 Appendix 3 – NSC Playgrounds Brochure: ‘A Place to Play’



Your guide to children's playgrounds in the North Sydney area

If you are a parent or carer of young children, this handy guide will help you and your children discover the delights of North Sydney's many playgrounds. The playgrounds range from simple swing-sets tucked away in local parks to sophisticated custom-built playgrounds, with a multitude of activities, located in some of our larger parks.

Playground upgrading and design

Since 1996, North Sydney Council has been progressively upgrading all playgrounds. We have won three awards for our playgrounds upgrading program: from Keep Australia Beautiful Council, Kidsafe NSW and most recently the National Award from Parks and Leisure Australia.

Over the past 20 years, North Sydney Council has moved away from using 'off-the-shelf' equipment: instead creating custom-designed playgrounds that respond to their location and provide unique opportunities and challenges for children of all levels of physical ability.

Playground hierarchy

To help you plan your visits to North Sydney's playgrounds, the playgrounds have been divided into three categories:

Regional Playgrounds serve the entire North Sydney Local Government Area as well as adjacent communities withing a 10km range.

District Playgrounds serve several adjoining neighbourhoods within a 5km radius.

Local Playgrounds serve the people of a residential neighbourhood within 500m walking distance.

This hierarchy takes into consideration:

- amount of equipment and number of associated facilities (eg seats, picnic tables, toilets).
- proximity to other venues and activities (eg sportsgrounds, walking tracks and shops).
- accessibility.
- where the playground is in the park.

Legend to Symbols



Regional



Playground is fully fenced



Picnic Table



District



Toilets



Playground has a number of accessible features



Local



Seats

3

Regional Playgrounds

Bradfield Park



Location: Alfred Sreet South, Milsons Point

Significant features:

- Equipment caters to a broad age range with activities best-suited to preschoolers at one end of the playground and activities more appropriate for over fives at the other.
- Equipment is low visual impact, but high adventure cable style in a landscaped setting with mature fig trees and rubber under-surfacing.
- Impressive views of harbour and city from this large foreshore park located beneath the northern pylons of the harbour bridge.
- Other park features include monthly markets, heritage items and significant tree plantings.
- Park is linked to the Olympic Pool and Luna Park site, and to open space areas along the Kirribilli foreshore.



St Leonards Park



Location: Cnr Miller & Falcon Sts, North Sydney

Significant features:

- Playground features landscaping and pathway activities including snakes and ladders.
- Incorporates many accessible activities including arm-operated swings and a roundabout.
- Features a music area with a range of working instruments.
- Playground is surrounded by 1930s style concrete walling.
- Shelter structure and BBQ's are located close to the playground.
- Heritage plantings in the park include fig and palm avenues.



Regional Playgrounds

District Playgrounds

Berry Island Reserve



Location: End of Shirley Road, Wollstonecraft

Significant features:

- Refurbished and fully-fenced in 2014 with some tall equipment for older children and selection of small-scale activities for younger users.
- Other features of the reserve include an Aboriginal interpretive walking track through the bushland and views of the harbour and city.



Blues Point Reserve



Location: End of Blues Point Road, McMahon's Point

Significant features:

- Upgraded in 2009 with custom designed stainless steel play equipment including swings, spinning rides and sculptural elements.
- Large figs provide afternoon shade.
- Whole park is fenced.
- Playground occupies a foreshore location and has excellent harbour, city and bridge views.

District Playgrounds



7

Brightmore Reserve

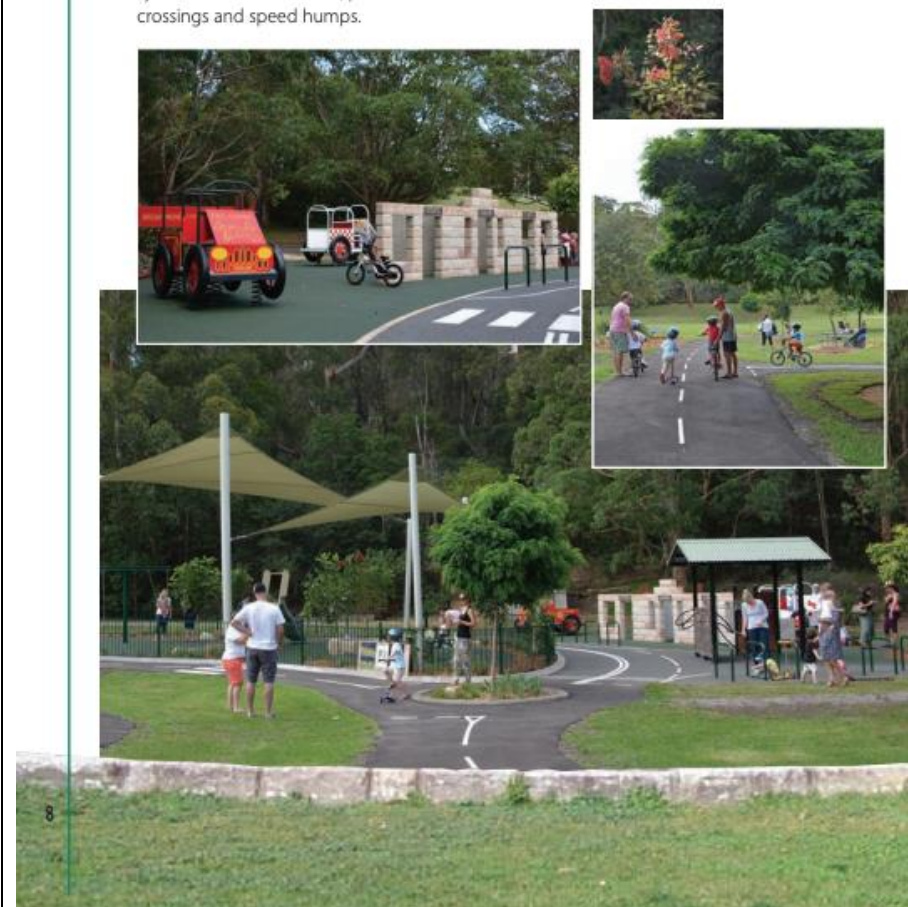


Location: Young Street, Cremorne

Significant features:

- Educational tricycle track suitable for children up to 10 years set around a 'play village' with a row of shops, petrol station and fire station.
- Tricycle track simulates the public road system with roundabouts, pedestrian crossings and speed humps.
- Also features a small, fenced, shaded central playground with swings and slide.
- Sports fields and barbecues are across the road in Primrose Park.

District Playgrounds



8

Civic Centre Park/Leisure Centre



Location: Cnr Miller & McLaren Streets, North Sydney

Significant features:

- Equipment for children located in the Leisure Centre grounds.
- Equipment includes junior and senior structures linked by a sandstone sandpit, a cubby house, an outdoor stage and a ball play area.
- Hours of use are restricted during school holiday vacation care programs and by weekly playgroup sessions (see Council's website for details www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/playgroups).

District Playgrounds



District Playgrounds

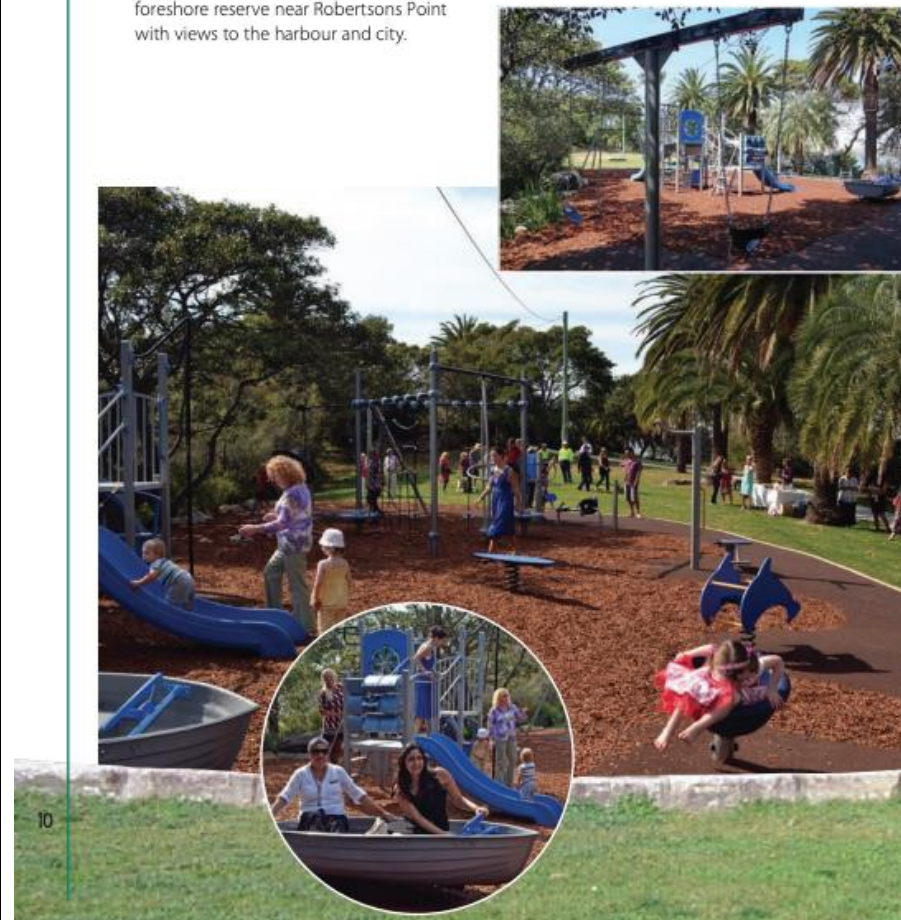
Cremorne Reserve



Location: End of Milson Road, Cremorne Point

Significant features:

- Playground upgraded in 2012 to include modern equipment for both junior and senior users plus fitness equipment for adults.
- Playground located in harbour foreshore reserve near Robertsons Point with views to the harbour and city.
- Other features of the reserve include MacCallum Pool, a foreshore walk featuring interpretive signage, bushland areas, two ferry wharves and a lighthouse at Robertsons Point.



Forsyth Park Playground



Location: 2 Montpelier Street, Neutral Bay

Significant features:

- Playground constructed in 2017 and features double flying fox with one accessible seat, wheelchair accessible carousel, all access seesaw, swings and climbing nets.
- Inclusive access to the playground via new pathway/ramp from Montpelier Street.
- Junior equipment and picnic tables at lower end, more senior equipment and outdoor gym at upper end, connected by graded pathways and gardens.



District Playgrounds

11

Kesterton Park



Location: High Sreet, North Sydney

Significant features:

- Waterfront park with ferry wharf.
- Playground upgraded with custom designed equipment in 2018.
- Rubber surfacing and lots of accessible activities.
- Shaded by mature trees with dramatic sandstone cliff backdrop and landscaped gardens.
- New outdoor fitness facility adjoins the play space.



12

Merrett Playground



Location: Woolcott Street, Waverton

Significant features:

- Playground has a 'motoring' theme including rocking car, tricycle track and service station.
- Good views to the harbour and city.
- Playground is part of Waverton Park which also contains a sports field and bowling club.
- Toilets are located on the Larkin Street side of Waverton Park.
- Park also contains a fitness circuit with one station adjacent to the playground and others located on the middle and lower levels of the park.



13

District Playgrounds

St. Thomas Rest Park



Location: West Street, Crows Nest

Significant features:

- Equipment caters to a wide age range and can accommodate many users.
- Modern equipment including climbers, slides and a roundabout situated in native gardens and shaded by trees.
- Former cemetery, now converted to a Rest Park is a significant heritage site.
- Toilets are located behind the Sexton's Cottage.



14

Tunks Park



Location: Brothers Avenue, Cammeray

Significant features:

- Refurbished and expanded in 2011 to include junior playspace that incorporates small landscaped artificial creekline, swings and picnic tables.
- Park is fenced along road edge.
- Playground designed to complement its bushland setting in terms of materials, colours and activities.
- Many accessible play activities.
- This foreshore park also contains sports fields, a boat ramp, BBQ's and exercise equipment.
- Toilets are located near the sports fields.



District Playgrounds

15

Brennan Park



Location: Hazelbank Road, Wollstonecraft

Significant features:

- Playground located beneath a majestic fig tree.
- Playground has a 'children's garden' theme incorporating daisy motifs in play equipment and in pathway mosaics.
- Heritage listed park with district views.
- Upgraded in 2018 to include carousel, cable arch and handball court.



16

Cahill Playground



Location: Sophia Street, Crows Nest

Significant features:

- Playground most suitable for toddlers featuring a 'wildlife wetland' theme and incorporating life-sized and over-sized rubber animals such as crocodiles, frogs and snakes in a landscaped setting.
- Fully fenced with a self-closing gate.
- Surrounded by residential properties.



17

Local Playgrounds

Euroka Street Playground



Location: Euroka Street, Waverton

Significant features:

- 'Jungle Gym' fitness-style playground incorporatin exercise activities, monkey bars, climbing wall, and handball court.
- Lush backdrop of native planting provides lots of shade.
- Numerous sandstone outcrops on lower level of the park.



18

Fred Hutley Reserve



Location: Hamilton Avenue, Cammeray

Significant features:

- Equipment includes a cable climber and a triple-width embankment slide.
- Playground is heavily landscaped and features native gardens and low retaining walls.
- Bushland views to suspension bridge and Tunks Park.



Local Playgrounds

19

Grasmere Children's Park



Location: Young Street, Cremorne

Significant features:

- Playground features child-scale sculpture gardens and pathways shaded by peppercorn trees.
- Activities include bridges, swings, slides, rockers and spinning rides.
- Paved path suitable for strollers and wheelchair users runs diagonally across this flat park.



20

Grasmere Reserve



Location: Benelong Lane, Cremorne

Significant features:

- Modular climbing structure with slides.
- Caters primarily for the over fives.
- Mature trees shade the playground.
- Park is surrounded by residential properties.

Local Playgrounds



21

Local Playgrounds

Green Park



Location: Warringa Road, Cammeray

Significant features:

- Senior Play area features a large tarzan swing & spinning ride.
- New junior play area with flying fox swing ride and spinner installed in 2014.
- Senior play area upgraded in 2015 to include basket swing and overhead spinner.
- An outdoor fitness facility is located just beneath the senior play area.
- Stands of mature native trees provide shade.
- Park also contains tennis courts, a community centre, a public hall, and is opposite a golf course.
- Recently expanded Kendall child care centre top playground area available for public use on weekends.
- Toilet is located within tennis courts.



22

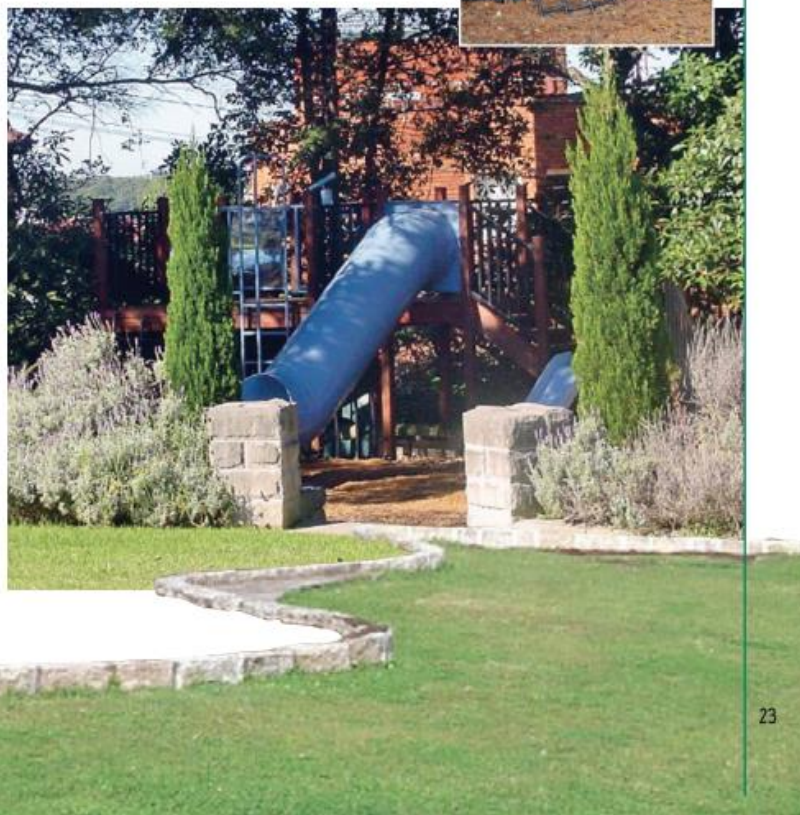
Hodgsons Lookout



Location: End of Kurraba Road, Neutral Bay

Significant features:

- Play equipment is positioned beneath mature trees and is enclosed by heritage style stone walls and gardens.
- Harbour and city views from this elevated foreshore location.
- Refurbished in 2017 to include basket swing, new spinner and rubber stepping mounds.



23

Local Playgrounds

Ilbery Reserve



Location: Barry Street, Neutral Bay

Significant features:

- Mature trees and gardens along boundaries provide shade and enclosure.
- Adjacent to tennis courts and bowling club.
- Playground upgraded in 2015 with new swings, spinning cable pyramid and cube climbing structure.
- Shade structure over main play area and rubber undersurfacing.
- Park fenced along street edges.



24

Lodge Road Reserve



Location: Cnr Lodge & Ellalong Roads, Cremorne

Significant features:

- Playground combines traditional swings and slides with more adventurous equipment in a landscaped setting.



25

Local Playgrounds

Milson Park



Location: McDougall Street, Kirribilli

Significant features:

- Play equipment reflects the heritage character of the park.
- This foreshore park has excellent harbour views.
- Park contains significant cultural heritage plantings, notably mature palm trees.
- The playground is fenced from the roadway.



26

Phillips Street Reserve



Location: Phillips Street, Neutral Bay

Significant features:

- Small playground located between residential properties.
- Deciduous trees provide shade.



Local Playgrounds

27

Local Playgrounds

Prior Avenue Playground



Location: Prior Avenue (off Bogota Avenue), Cremorne Point

Significant features:

- Playground features a child-scale sandstone castle with drawbridge, balcony and spiral slide.
- Small local reserve surrounded by residential properties.
- Playground is adjacent to a Council-owned tennis court.



28

Sirius Street Playground



Location: Intersection of Milson Road & Sirius Street, Cremorne Point

Significant features:

- Modular play equipment with a nautical theme to reflect the foreshore location.
- Steeply sloping park links to Cremorne Reserve and harbour foreshore walk.
- Harbour views, sandstone outcrops, and large native trees which provide shade.
- Playground is fenced along Milson Road.



29

Local Playgrounds

Victoria Street Playground



Location: Victoria Street, McMahons Point

Significant features:

- Play equipment includes swings, slides and spinning activities.
- Small local park with large native trees providing shade.



30

Warringa Park



Location: Intersection Rawson Street & Kurraba Road, North Sydney

Significant features:

- Play equipment in a landscaped setting includes traditional swings and more adventurous equipment.
- Entire park is fenced.
- Adjacent to Anderson Park (foreshore park containing a sports field) and Clark Road shops.
- Playground scheduled for refurbishment 2018/19.

Local Playgrounds



31

Watt Park



Location: End of Lavender Crescent, Lavender Bay

Significant features:

- Playground echoes the style of play equipment found in this heritage listed park in the 1930s.
- Nautical theme reflects the foreshore location.
- Cool and shady park with views to the harbour and city.
- Toilets are located through the railway arch in Quibaree Park.
- Park links to Luna Park and beyond via the Lavender Bay foreshore.
- Upgraded in 2016 with large embankment tunnel slide, new swings and arch climber.

Local Playgrounds



32

W H Brothers Memorial Park



Location: Fifth Avenue, Cremorne

Significant features:

- Park contains an activity trail with stepping stones, low bridges and an embankment slide.
- Caters primarily for the under fives.
- Sunny north facing park with spectacular views over Middle Harbour.
- Memorial structure featuring a concrete seating area.

Local Playgrounds



33

Wollstonecraft Station Park



Location: Milray Avenue, Wollstonecraft

Significant features:

- Small shady, fully-fenced playground suited to junior users.
- Upgraded in 2013 to include swings, spinners, climbers and rubber animal sculptures.

Local Playgrounds



34

The following parks contain swing-sets. While not significant enough to warrant a full listing in this guide, they may be of interest to local residents.

- Tye Park, Ancrum Street, Waverton.
- Mary French Reserve, Mill Mill Street, McMahon's Point.
- Primrose Park, Young Street, Cremorne.



Playgrounds team



35



North Sydney Council

200 Miller Street
North Sydney NSW 2060

T 9936 8100

E council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au

W www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/playgrounds



6.4 Appendix 4 – Zoning of Playgrounds

Zone RE1 Public Recreation

1. Objectives of the Zone

The particular objectives of this zone are to:

- To enable land to be used for public open space or recreational purposes.
- To provide a range of recreational settings and activities and compatible land uses.
- To protect and enhance the natural environment for recreational purposes.
- To ensure sufficient public recreation areas are available for the benefit and use of residents of, and visitors to, North Sydney.

2. Permitted without consent

Environmental protection works.

3. Permitted with consent

Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Community facilities; Environmental facilities; Information and education facilities; Kiosks; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (outdoor); Roads; Water recreation structures.

4. Prohibited

Any development not specified in item 2 or 3.

6.5 Appendix 5 - Definitions

Playground Upgrade

Upgrade: To improve something by providing something that is of better quality or more effective.

Proposed work described in this Plan of Management as a ‘playground upgrade’ could reasonably be expected to comprise some or all of the following elements:

- Increase to the size of the playground
- Increase in the amount of play equipment
- Removal of worn play items and replacement with items that provide more and better play opportunities
- Provision of many more inclusive elements (including play equipment, undersurfacing and paths and ancillary items)

Playground Refurbishment

Refurbish: To make clean, bright, or fresh again; renovate.

Proposed work described in this Plan of Management as a ‘playground refurbishment’ could reasonably be expected to comprise some or all of the following elements:

- Renovation of existing items of play equipment, undersurfacing and ancillary items (including painting, rustproofing, replacement of worn parts etc)
- Removal of items that are worn beyond repair (and replacement with similar, or improved items)
- Addition of new items where there is room within the existing soft fall area
- Provision of some new elements to make the playground more inclusive
- Little, if any, change to the overall size of the playground

6.6 Appendix 6 – Common Questions

Council regularly receives queries about various aspects of playgrounds in North Sydney. To assist the community, in this section we provide answers to some of the most asked questions regarding:

- Undersurfacing
- Fencing
- Shade
- Playground Equipment
- Playgrounds & Nature
- Playgrounds & Age
- What Should I Do?

Undersurfacing

Why aren't all playgrounds surfaced with rubber?
(my child gets dirty playing on organic mulch)

Council offers visitors a choice of playgrounds; in some the entire undersurfacing is organic softfall, in others it is entirely rubber, and in many playgrounds, it is a combination of both. Providing 'natural' play environments for children whilst ensuring that playgrounds are as inclusive as possible is a delicate balancing act.

Children spend much of their play time in indoor or very controlled play spaces including childcare centres, schools, shopping centres and fast-food restaurant playgrounds. These venues are often sterile, with rubber ground surfacing and roofs or shade sails. Public playgrounds are one of the few places where children can get a true sense of playing outdoors and interacting with nature on a regular and frequent basis.

While rubber undersurfacing makes playgrounds easily accessible to all the community, when compared to organic soft fall, it is extremely expensive. Council's playgrounds budgets are tight, and the emphasis must be on maximising play value. Organic soft fall is a comparatively economical undersurfacing material that provides a soft landing, can be traversed by strollers, complements the general park environs and is reasonably easily maintained. Additionally, it allows water and nutrients through to tree root systems and protects the root zone from compaction.

Children's outdoor play is messy business, and it should be this way. Children learn from touching and interacting with all kinds of materials: making mud pies and building cubby houses are just a couple of examples of play that involves children getting dirty while learning new skills, co-operating with others and, most importantly, having fun.

Fencing

Why aren't all playgrounds fenced? / I want a particular playground fenced

Council offers playground visitors a choice of fenced, partially fenced and unfenced playgrounds. While fencing is appropriate in some locations, for example near major roads or on the waterfront, or if the playground is naturally almost fully enclosed, fences are not desirable in all locations. In large parks fences visually disturb the continuity of open space areas, creating a barrier between the playground and the rest of the park. They can interfere with informal play and impede running games that are important contributors to children's physical fitness and health.

Fences and gates can make playground access challenging for less mobile and elderly visitors and can send an (unintentional) message to parents and carers that supervision of children (and sometimes dogs) is not required.

Council's Playgrounds brochure: '*A Place to Play*', which can be downloaded from our website, has information showing which playgrounds are fenced.

Shade

Why isn't there shade over the whole of every playground?

Council's playgrounds offer visitors a variety of settings, from partially shaded to fully shaded. Some playgrounds are shaded all day, while others receive better shade in either the mornings or the afternoons. In some playgrounds, the presence of scenic views into and through the playground makes the provision of any shade a challenge.

Council encourages parents and carers visiting playgrounds in summer to carefully consider whether there is likely to be enough shade for their needs in the playground they are planning to visit at the time of day they visit.

North Sydney's large network of playgrounds means that parents and carers have several playgrounds in their local area; and they can choose the most appropriate one for each playground visit. Fully shaded facilities (such as Sirius Street Playground in Cremorne Point) are excellent choices for hot, sunny, summer's days, whereas playgrounds that have less shade may be better choices in winter, or at either end of the day (for example Brothers Memorial Park in Cremorne).

Ensuring the well-being of playground users is a joint responsibility between parents and carers and Council. The Cancer Council's Sun-Smart guidelines recognise that carers should not rely solely on Council to provide shade and shelter from the sun but should consider and implement sun-smart practices such as:

- Ensuring children and carers are wearing adequate protective clothing and hats
- Ensuring sunscreen is applied and re-applied
- Timing visits to playgrounds where possible to avoid the hottest parts of the day

Playground Equipment

Why can't we have more swings in our local playground?

Swings are really popular and are always busy

Council acknowledges that swings are very popular and strives to include them in every playground. However, swings only accommodate a small number of children and they take up a large amount of space. (Australian Playground Standards detail how much free space must be provided around swings and how much safety under-surfacing must be installed). Swings also have what is called a 'forced movement' zone which cannot overlap the fall zones of other equipment and should not encroach into circulation routes or desire-lines within the playground. For this reason, swings must be carefully sited within playgrounds, and often take up more space than would appear necessary.

Council's playground designs judiciously balance the desire for swings with the need to maximise play value within available budgets and available space. Where possible, Council incorporates inclusive swings (such as basket swings) that can accommodate multiple users as well as parent-and-child or 'joey' swings into playgrounds as they maximise user capacity and therefore play value.

Why can't we have a sandpit in our local playground?

While sandpits can provide fantastic play opportunities for a diverse age and ability range, sandpits in the public realm require very high levels of maintenance as well as daily inspections to ensure they are free from contaminants and sharp items.

Sandpits can therefore only be included in playgrounds where it is possible and practical to give them daily attention. There is a sandpit in the playground in St Leonards Park and one at the North Sydney Leisure Centre (although hours of use here are restricted by programs including after school care and playgroups). The playground in Tunks Park contains a gravel pit with diggers and a pulley system which offers children a comparable experience.

Playgrounds & Nature

My local playground is messy with sticks and leaves and other natural detritus. Why doesn't Council clean it up?

There are plants in the playground that encroach on the paths and might scratch or poke a toddler's eyes

There are rocks, low walls and hard surfaces in the playground that children might hurt themselves on if they trip over

Public playgrounds are one of the few places where children in North Sydney can easily and regularly get a true sense of playing outdoors and interacting with nature. Council endeavours to provide outdoor play areas that allow children to interact with nature; most playgrounds contain trees and gardens, and landscaping is an integral component of North Sydney's playgrounds.

Earth mounding and sandstone boulders can separate one area of a playground from another without resorting to more intrusive physical barriers such as fences. Shrubs and groundcovers perform a variety of functions; their fragrances, colours, textures and seasonal variation add interest, while mass planted areas can create distinct playground 'rooms', separating the various activities and age groups. They also provide visual and physical barriers to movement, and influence circulation patterns within the playgrounds.

It is the intrinsic nature of trees and vegetation to drop leaves, twigs, flowers, seeds and other detritus. Children learn from touching and interacting with all kinds of materials: think making mud pies and building cubby houses. Using these 'loose parts' as part of their imaginative play can significantly enhance the play experience for children.

Council inspects all playgrounds on a monthly basis, with some high use playgrounds or playgrounds with special maintenance requirements (such as seasonal fruit drop under fig trees) receiving additional visits. Playgrounds are swept and otherwise cleaned as necessary during scheduled maintenance inspections.

Outdoor play provides open-ended, dynamic and varied opportunities which are unpredictable and at times risky. However, the risks and challenges of being outdoors provides rich opportunities for learning, problem-solving and developing social competence. Children gain mastery and a sense of accomplishment, thus further encouraging them to face new challenges. Providing healthy risk-taking opportunities is an essential component of quality outdoor play.

Council's goal is to manage risk, rather than to eliminate it, and to provide outdoor play environments where the risks of serious injury are reduced, but creativity, challenge and excitement are maintained.

Children are playing in the bush and gardens around the playground equipment; Shouldn't Council do something to make sure they just play in the playground?

Allowing children to expand their play beyond the 'formal' play area has positive impacts on play and development. Imaginations are stimulated and interactions with nature become more intimate if children are playing in the bush or gardens. Generally, playground gardens are planted with species that can tolerate the impacts of children playing in and around them. Where vegetation is being negatively impacted, a temporary barrier may be installed. In particularly sensitive areas (such as regenerating bushland) a more permanent barrier may be appropriate.

Playgrounds & Age

Are there any playgrounds for babies who are crawling?

Public playgrounds have never been designed to cater for crawlers, mainly due to the potential for conflict with more mobile older children and hygiene issues. Playground equipment designed for public use generally comes with a recommended age range and Council is not currently aware of any equipment specifically recommended for crawling age children in a public setting. Parents and carers with children under two must consider the location of moving equipment and circulation routes if letting their children crawl in playgrounds.

Are there any playgrounds for teenagers?

North Sydney's playgrounds primarily cater for children of diverse abilities and capabilities between two and 12 years of age. While several of Council's playgrounds (including Forsyth Park and Berry Island Reserve) challenge children at the top end of this range, most playground users in North Sydney are considerably younger.

There are other recreation facilities in North Sydney that cater for children who have outgrown or are not interested in playgrounds, as well as for teens and older users. Facilities such as basketball rings and backboards, a skatepark, outdoor fitness equipment and an outdoor table tennis table offer opportunities for leisure and physical activity and provide important social spaces for this sector of the North Sydney community.

Map 2 in the Playgrounds Plan of Management: '*Fitness Equipment & Other Play Facilities in North Sydney*' shows the location of facilities that cater to the recreation needs of children and teens who have 'outgrown' playgrounds.

I would like my local playground to cater for all my children (from a crawling baby to a 13-year-old)

Not all Council playgrounds caters for children of all ages. There are intrinsic issues with attempting to accommodate a wide age range in a limited space; older children can dominate and displace the younger ones or even worse, cause injury with their more boisterous activity.

Council offers visitors a network of playgrounds; while there is a playground to suit all children, not every playground will suit all children. Parents and carers are encouraged to read Council's Playgrounds brochure: *'A Place to Play'*, which can be downloaded from Council's website, to decide which playgrounds are most likely to suit their needs.

Generally, larger playgrounds located in some of North Sydney's bigger parks are the most likely to cater to the entire two to 12 age range, and often also have adjacent lawn areas suitable for ball games or other older children's activities. Playgrounds capable of accommodating a wide age range are located in Berry Island Reserve, Forsyth Park, Bradfield Park and St Leonards Park.

It is also worth keeping in mind that age does not necessarily equal capability. The skills, confidence and the desire to challenge themselves varies from child to child and does not necessarily equate with their physical age.

The access steps to the playground equipment are too big for my toddler to climb without help

In most instances play equipment is self-regulating; if a child cannot access a piece of equipment by themselves, it is not intended for their use.

Parents and carers are responsible for supervising children in their care at all times, and in ensuring their children are using equipment appropriate to their age and capabilities.

What should I do?

There is a piece of equipment that is damaged/broken

Contact North Sydney Council:

Ph: 9936 8100

Email: council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au

The issue will be referred to our playground's maintenance staff for actioning.

Remember to include all the information you can about the problem, including:

- Which piece of equipment or ancillary item is damaged or broken
- Which playground (name of park and street address)
- How urgent is the issue
- Your contact details (so relevant staff can respond to your issue directly, if needed)

People are letting their dog enter the playground

Under the *Companion Animals Act 1998*, dogs are prohibited from being in or within 10m of any children's play areas. Council's playgrounds have signs at or near main playground entrances that state this. Additionally, all dogs in public places must be under the control of a competent person. Council is required by the State Government to enforce the laws concerning dogs, and Council Rangers may issue on-the-spot fines for infringements.

If you feel comfortable in doing so, you could point out the signage about dogs to the owners of the dog. Alternatively, you can contact Council's Rangers.

North Sydney Council:

Phone: 9936 8100 (request to be transferred to Ranger Services)

While Rangers may not be able to turn up to the park immediately, notifying them will alert them to the issue in a particular playground and if it is a recurring issue, they can increase patrols of that playground.

People are using the playground for anti-social behaviour at night

If the anti-social behaviour involves law-breaking, you should contact the local Police in the first instance:

North Sydney Police Station
273 Pacific Highway Crows Nest
Phone: 9956 3199
Open 24 hours

If the matter is noise-related, it may be appropriate to contact Council's Rangers.

North Sydney Council:

Phone: 9936 8100 (request to be transferred to Ranger Services)