

Appendices

6

6.1 Abbreviations and definitions

6.1.1 Abbreviations

Abbreviations

The City: City of Ryde

IOSP: Integrated Open Space Plan

AS/NZS: Australian / New Zealand Standards

LGA: Local Government Area

DCMS: Department for Culture, Media and Sport, UK

CPTED: Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

BCA: Building Code of Australia

6.1.2 Definitions

Activities not based on equipment

Numerous teenagers requested park facilities which encompass playful activities which are not playgrounds. These activities are varied and comprise path networks, bike tracks, small sport areas such as ping pong tables and badminton nets/courts, and other small “non-coached” sport facilities such as nutmeg or panna courts.

Adventure playground

An adventure playground can be described as a space dedicated solely to children’s play, where skilled playworkers enable and facilitate the ownership, development and design of that space – physically, socially and culturally – by the children playing there. It usually offers both indoor and outdoor play experiences.

Bike parks

Bike tracks should be complex in their layout, with built in challenges according to age group. Bike tracks that weave in and out of vegetation, between rocks and through tunnels are preferred. Bike tracks should not be limited to bmx bikes.

Community play programs

This is a variation on a play ranger program, with the program being run by the community instead of the City, with some (minimal) council funding. Trained parents are on a roster in a nominated park, and are recognisable because they wear fluoro vests and have a banner at the playground. The parent ensures that it is safe for children to independently access and use playgrounds, and monitors bullying etc.

Designated play space

A playable space specifically designed for play and informal recreation.

Destination Playground

A medium to large sized playground generally accessible by car or public transport within 2km walk of all residents and which caters for all age groups including young people, (district or regional level playgrounds). Generally of diverse and unique design with a high level of challenge, and reflective of significant features of the surrounding character.

District Playground

A medium to large sized playground generally within 1km of residents which caters for all ages (including young people). Generally associated with a district level recreation or sporting facility.

Everyday Playground

A small to medium sized playground easily accessible within 600m walk of all residents which caters for children up to 12 years of age (Local or Neighbourhood level playgrounds). Generally of simple design appropriate to the surrounding character.

Environmental play/discovery

The concept of wild spaces where children and young people can play freely or simply discover nature in a natural setting is gaining popularity. Spaces can be allocated in bushland areas for this purpose, or can also comprise online challenges which outline an environmental activity in a public park. By downloading a pamphlet, a special environmental play activity is available to families, e.g. a walk to a creek, with several interesting features to look at along the way.

Geo-caching

A real-world outdoor treasure hunting game. Players try to locate hidden containers, called geocaches, using GPS-enabled devices and then share their experiences online. This is popular among young people and can easily be used in natural parkland settings, with links available on the City's website.

Hybrid play areas

These spaces provide a play outcome which is part of another valued community facility. The most common example is that of a community garden which is combined with a playground.

Informal recreation

What teenagers do when they follow their own ideas and interests, in their own way and for their own reasons: reflecting the fact that as young people get older they no longer identify with the term 'playing' but use other terms for their freely chosen, personally directed activities. In this guide, the term 'play' is used to include both play and informal recreation.

Local Playground

A small sized playground generally within 400m of residents in low / medium density areas and 200m of residents in high density areas which caters for young children with a limited diversity of play equipment.

Neighbourhood Playground

A medium sized playground generally within 600m of residents which caters for young and older children.

Non-designated play space

A public space used by different groups of people for varying reasons, which might also be used for play and informal recreation.

Permanent Play Provision

A playground or play provision in a fixed location with constructed elements, (e.g. playground with equipment in a park, bike play path).

Play

What children and young people do when they follow their own ideas and interests, in their own way and for their own reasons (DCMS 2004).

Playable space

Any public space or facility that children and young people might legitimately use for play and informal recreation.

Playground

An area intended for children's play including the site, natural features, built landscape, and any manufactured equipment. AS4685 2004

Playgroups in the park

This is a program that can operate in a known park at certain times in the year e.g. in April, June and September. The aim is to provide a range of activities and entertainment for children aged 0 - 5 years as well as providing community information for families. Stalls are available for groups and organisations.

Play buses

Play buses are usually a joint initiative between councils and charitable organisations such as Save the Children. The program provides 2 hour supported playgroups for children and their parents or caregivers in a park setting every week. Trained staff and family support workers provide activities for children, while parents build support networks. Buses with equipment have a timetable of parks and times, usually with wet weather alternatives.

Play days

One play day a year is programmed and on this day, communities celebrate the importance of play to their communities in a variety of ways. Play days are usually held in a number of venues e.g. streets, parks and civic centres. There is usually a sponsor who assists council and community groups with this joint venture. Some play days are themed, e.g. nature play days with items such as scavenger hunts in the bush.

Play equipment

Equipment and structures, including components and constructional elements with or on which children can play outdoors or indoors. It includes playground surfacing (see AS/NZS 4422).

Play pods

The Play Pod is a secure accessible container, or 'pod', filled with high quality 'loose parts' play materials. Clean, safe scrap, otherwise destined for landfill, is carefully selected and recycled for use in the Pod. This can include anything from old car tyres and steering wheels, to cardboard tubing, milk crates, used keyboards and telephones, fabric and dress-ups.

The Pod is delivered to playgrounds or designated areas, to stimulate self-directed play opportunities at nominated days and times for kids. A trained professional opens the pod, and works with the community and parents to ensure that the opportunities for rich 'open ended' and self-directed play are optimised. Refer to www.playforlife.org.au for additional information

Play program

A play provision not requiring permanent built facilities. It can be undertaken in a variety of locations (temporary and easily transferable) and involve a variety of play professionals in the facilitation of play opportunities.

Play provision

The provision of different types of playable space.

Play rangers

This is a program for children and young people aged 5 to 15 years old. It operates on the same principle as a play bus, with the exception that parents are not required to attend. The play program is varied. Trained staff work in small teams, visiting parks, play areas or other public spaces, once or twice a week for a couple of hours. They are equipped with sports, games, ideas and equipment, and undertake activities to suit a wide range of ages.

Play streets

In this vision for play, carefully selected local streets are closed to traffic on a scheduled day, for an allocated period of time, and opened for the community to use anyway they like, especially for children and young people to play.

The event ideally would ideally be a joint initiative by local community organisations and the City, and could be promoted through local early childhood centres, preschools and schools. These events usually attract approximately 600 participants.

Regional Playground

A large sized playground generally within 2km of residents which caters for all ages (including young people) and displays exceptional and unique design qualities. Generally associated with a regional level recreation or sporting complex.

Shared school play areas

This is a shared idea of play space, where a portion of a school is developed as a play area, and is also available to the public for use out of school hours. This form of play provision is usually adopted where there is insufficient playground provision in public parks in built up areas, and provides another option to give children access to quality play provision. It can also provide access to unique play experiences not commonly found in public parks e.g. access to a Liberty Swing in a special school.

Spaces for young people

These are park facilities especially planned for young people, with a range of challenging and sophisticated equipment and furniture including obstacle courses, tree top adventures, large social play elements (e.g. 5 way swings and 360 degree swings), hang out spaces which are well lit and wi-fi. While social activities are valued, so are facilities where homework can be quietly and safely undertaken. Skate parks are included in this genre, but are not within the scope of the Play Plan.

Supporting facility

A constructed, non-play based amenity which provides day-to day facilities for playground users. Includes toilets, BBQs, bubblers, furniture etc.

Unique playgrounds/destination play facilities

Some playground facilities are planned around a special feature or experience and offer a valued point of difference in the play provision in the City. These playgrounds attract targeted residents (e.g. senior citizens), or visitors from the local neighbourhood and further afield.

Youth programs

Established council youth programs such as theatre, youth music and youth art prize programs can all have part of the play program scheduled to take place in public parks and spaces. Ryde Hunters Hill Youth Interagency has committed to the creation of a youth space.

6.2 Supporting Information

6.2.1 Playground design criteria

Table 19. Playground design criteria

	Everyday Playgrounds		Destination Playgrounds	
	Local	Neighbourhood	District	Regional
Playground Profile				
Primary Age group focus	0-5	0-12	All ages (children and adults)	All ages (children and adults)
Number of children	3 to 7	8 to 25	30 to 65	85 to 150 or more
Number of carers	2 to 4	4 to 12	15 to 30	30 to 50
Approximate size	90 - 210m ²	240 - 750m ²	900 - 1950m ²	2550 to 4500m ²
Quantitative Criteria				
Playground Experience (Specifics)				
Play Experience				
1. Inclusive play	●	●●	●●	●●●
2. Dynamic play				
– Balance	●	●	●●	●●●
– Climb	P	●	●●	●●●
– Rocking	●	●	●●	●●●
– Slide (preferably facing south)	●	●	●●	●●●
– Swing	●	●	●●	●●●
– Spin	●	●	●●	●●●
3. Informal Imaginative play	●	●	●●	●●●
4. Landscape/Nature play	●●	●●	●●●	●●●
5. Educational/learning/art	●●●	●●●	●●	●●●

Priority Rating

NP = No Provision

P = If Possible

● minimum provision

●● medium provision

●●● maximum provision

*Waterplay could include: water rills / taps / splash pads

** Technology Play could include: electronic facilities / QR codes

	Everyday Playgrounds		Destination Playgrounds	
	Local	Neighbourhood	District	Regional
6. Water play *	NP	NP	●●	●●●
7. Technology play **	NP	NP	●	●●
8. Kick about (open space)	●	●	●●	●●●
9. Bike path	NP	●	●●	●●● with play features
Access				
1. Path to playground*	●●●●	●●●●	●●●● (Accessible)	●●●● (Accessible)
2. Path around playground*	●	●●	●●●●	●●●●
3. Pram / Wheelchair parking adjacent seating	●	●●	●●●●	●●●●
Edging to play surface**	Combination (as appropriate)	Combination (as appropriate)	Combination (as appropriate)	Combination (as appropriate)
1. Boulders/stones	●●	●●	●●	●●
2. Timber (flush)	●●	●● (30% flush min.)	●●●●	●●●●
3. Concrete edge/path (flush)	●●	●● (30% flush min.)	●●●●	●●●●
Play surface	Choose one (as appropriate)	Choose one (as appropriate)	Choose two (as appropriate)	Choose all (as appropriate)
1. Mulch	●	●	●●	●●●
2. Sand	●	●	●●	●●●
3. Softfall	●	●	●●	●●●
4. Artificial turf	●	●	●	●●
5. Variation activity vs. circulation	NP	NP	●	●●
Boundary Enclosure				
1. Defined edge	●	●	●●	●●●
2. Fence/wall and gate	NP (30% flush min.)	NP	●●	●●●
3. Open	●	●	●	NP
Shade (min. 50% of playground)				
1. Shade sail (prioritise play pods)	NP	●	●●●●	●●●●
2. Tree canopy	●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●

Priority Rating

NP = No Provision

P = If Possible

● minimum provision

●● medium provision

●●● maximum provision

	Everyday Playgrounds		Destination Playgrounds	
	Local	Neighbourhood	District	Regional
Drainage	●	●	●●	●●●
Playground Facilities (Support)				
Furniture				
1. Seat (backed + armrest)	●●●	●	●●●	●●●
2. Picnic table (accessible)	●	●	●●	●●●
3. Platform seat	NP	NP	●	●●
4. Bin (trash + recycle)	●	●	●●●	●●●
5. Bubbler	●	●●	●	●●●
6. BBQ	NP	●	●	●●●
7. Lighting	NP	NP	●● (paths only)	●● (paths and playground)
8. Bike rack*	●	●	●●	●●
9. Playground signage	NP	NP	●	●●
Shade				
1. Solid structure (picnic area)	NP	●	●●	●●●
Infrastructure				
1. Toilet (accessible with change facilities)	NP	NP	●●	●●●
2. Car park	NP	NP	●●	●●●
3. Accessible parking**	NP	NP	●●	●●●
4. Special vehicle stop (e.g. mini-bus)	NP		●	●●
5. Cafe/Coffee Cart	NP	NP	P	●●
Qualitative Criteria				
General Experience				
1. Appeal	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
2. Legible layout	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●

Priority Rating

NP = No Provision

P = If Possible

● minimum provision

●● medium provision

●●● maximum provision

*If playground sits adjacent to a bike track, a bikerack is to be provided

** Any designated all abilities playground to provide accessible parking

	Everyday Playgrounds		Destination Playgrounds	
	Local	Neighbourhood	District	Regional
3. Flexibility	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
4. Imaginative	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
5. Originality	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
Safety (CPTED)*				
1. Adult supervision (central location)	●●	●●	●●●	●●●
2. Layout (drops/blind corners)	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
3. Maintained	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
4. Passive surveillance	●●●	●●	●●	●
5. Play equipment/fall zones	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
Landscape Integration				
1. Park integration	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
2. Planting	●●	●●	●●●	●●●
3. Microclimate (wind/shade)	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
4. Material finishes	●●	●●	●●●	●●●
5. Designer + Design	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
Social Sustainability				
Interaction - Grouped seating	●	●	●●	●●●

How to use: These playground design criteria are intended as a best practice design brief for future playgrounds. They are a checklist of recommended playground elements which could be included in a playground of that level.

Design inclusions should be appropriate to site specific characteristics, budget and design aspiration and aim to maximise inclusive play opportunities.

Priority Rating

NP = No Provision

P = If Possible

● minimum provision

●● medium provision

●●● maximum provision

*CPTED = Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

6.2.2 Playground audit criteria

How were the criteria developed?

Each park typology was confirmed and summarised through the development of the Design Framework. This Design Framework, coupled with the anticipated criteria outcomes, allowed a checklist of items and qualities to be developed (refer Table 33). This checklist was then reviewed and completed during the on site assessments of the playgrounds within the City's LGA to record the existing state, and identified opportunities for improvement.

How were the criteria assessed?

On-site assessments were undertaken during which all relevant aspects of the playgrounds were observed, analysed and first round recommendations recorded.

The rating of playgrounds against the criteria generally involved recording the existing state, identifying if that state was satisfactory, and suggesting method of improvement if required. Reference to the Design Framework for each level of playground (i.e. Regional, District, Neighbourhood and Local) was made during the assessment process and informed first round recommendations.

It should be noted that a satisfactory rating could be given to an item that was not present within that playground, should it be considered a non-essential item. The absence of an item or characteristic did not necessarily ensure a rating of 'not satisfactory'.

A summary SWOT Analysis was undertaken as part of the audit process to summarise the key on site findings and provide general comments on the atmosphere and character of the playgrounds.

Audit Criteria

Quantity

- Access
- Shade
- Furniture
- Play surface.

Quality

- General experience
- Safety
- Landscape integration
- Micro climate
- Enclosure
- Age group
- Play experience
- Social sustainability
- Cultural sustainability
- Environmental sustainability
- Economic sustainability.

Table 20. Audit criteria details

Criteria	Observation	Description
<i>Access</i>		
Parking	On site/off site/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the existing number and location of parking spaces sufficiently service the playground?
External paths	Existing/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there an access path present from the surrounding park facilities to the entrance of the playground? Does this path provide satisfactory access to the playground?
Internal paths	Existing/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there an internal circulation path within the playground boundary? Does this path provide satisfactory methods of movement throughout the playground?
Adjacent recreation facility	Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there any significant adjacent recreation facilities that may provide additional amenity to the playground, or which may draw people to the playground?
<i>Shade</i>		
Solid structure	Existing/satisfactory/upgrade/add	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there solid shade structures present and, if present, do they provide satisfactory shade to the playground?
Sail	Existing/satisfactory/upgrade/add	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there shade sails present and, if present, do they provide satisfactory shade to the playground?
Tree canopy	Existing/satisfactory/add	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there trees present which create a shade canopy over the playground? Is the shade created satisfactory for the playground?

Criteria	Observation	Description
Furniture		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seat • Table • Platform seat • Bin • Bubbler • Lighting • Bike rack • Signage • Supporting amenity 	Existing/satisfactory/upgrade/add	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the following furniture items present in the playground? Do they provide satisfactory amenity to the playground? If not, what additions/changes are recommended?
Play surface		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sand • Mulch • Rubber softfall • Artificial turf • None • Edging 	Existing/Upgrade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the following play surface types present in the playground? Do they provide satisfactory amenity and safety surfacing to the playground? If not, what additions/changes are recommended? Consider design quality with inclusion of multiple surface types if appropriate.

Criteria	Observation	Description
Drainage		
	Satisfactory/upgrade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there evidence of unsatisfactory drainage design? Is there evidence of erosion? Is there an excess of surface water in the playground?
Design		
	Satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the playground meet best practice design guidelines? Refer to Design Framework of appropriate design quality and key design elements.
General experience		
Appeal	Satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the playground come across as an appealing and inviting environment for children and adults?
Clear structure	Satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is a structure, zones of use, paths of movement, entry and exits points legible to children and adults?
Flexibility	Satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there opportunities for varying uses and types of play or is the playground generally quite prescriptive in nature? Does the playground and its amenities provide flexible opportunities for gathering for example?
Imaginative	Satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the pieces of equipment or play opportunities limiting in nature? Does the playground provide opportunities for re-interpretation?
Originality	Satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the playground have a theme? Does the playground display qualities of its immediate surroundings? Is the equipment limited to basic off-the-shelf items in a traditional arrangement?

Criteria	Observation	Description
Safety		
Adult supervision	Present/satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there sufficient sight lines and viewing points for adult supervision of the whole playground?
Evidence of use	Present/satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there evidence that the play equipment and associated amenities are being used? Is wear and tear present?
Layout	Present/satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there any threats present within the playground zone in terms of heights of walls, materials used and sight lines?
Maintained	Present/satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the level of maintenance satisfactory?
Passive surveillance	Present/satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there opportunity for passive surveillance both from within the park and from adjacent land uses or roads?
Landscape integration		
Landscape play	Satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there play elements within the playground constructed from raw materials, or imitating natural environments? (E.g. ephemeral creeklines, earth mounding, boulders and planting)?
Park	Satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the playground sit well within the overall park? Are there elements of design and amenity in the park that continue into the playground creating a consistent character?
Planting	Satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there well established planting beds within the playground?

Criteria	Observation	Description
Microclimate		
	Satisfactory/Not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do climatic factors such as aspect, prevailing winds, tree canopy etc create a comfortable microclimate within the playground?
Enclosure		
Defined edge	Present/satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there retaining walls, dense planting, mounding etc that create an enclosure around the playground?
Fence and gate	Present/satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the playground or zones within the playground enclosed by a fence? Does that fence structure include a gate?
Open	Present/satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there no barriers to the playground perimeter? Is this acceptable considering the context of the playground?
Age group		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All ages Child - young Child - older Teenager Toddler 	Satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the equipment and supporting facilities satisfactory for the intended user age group?

Criteria	Observation	Description
Play experience		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible • Balance • Climb • Informal • Kick about • Nature play • Ride bike path • Sand • Water • Senses • Slide • Spin • Swing • Technology 	Present/satisfactory/not satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the Design Framework for detail on the playground level requirements. Are the below types of play present in the playground? Is the inclusion/exclusion of these experiences satisfactory?
Social sustainability		
Activity	Present/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the playground and supporting amenities provide opportunities for organised group activities? Does the playground promote a suitable level of activity?
Interaction	Present/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the playground provide opportunities for social and community interaction? Examples include grouped seating and gathering spaces for varying group sizes.
Ownership	Present/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there evidence of a sense of ownership by the community over the playground? This may include building of informal structures, informal signage by residents, improvised changes.

Criteria	Observation	Description
Cultural sustainability		
Art	Present/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the playground include any art pieces such as murals and sculptures?
Diversity	Present/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the playground provide facilities and amenities for varying cultures, ages and genders?
Heritage	Present/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the playground include features or structures clearly connecting it to the history of the site or surrounds? This may include interpretive signage, theming, preservation of heritage structures or landforms.
Environmental sustainability		
Adaptation	Present/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the playground include initiatives to adapt to climate change?
Education	Present/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the playground include signage, structures etc that educate the community about sustainability and climate change?
Mitigation	Present/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the playground include initiatives to mitigate climate change and other environmental impacts?
Economic sustainability		
Efficiency	Present/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the playground include water and energy efficient facilities and amenities? Do they require minimal maintenance due to solid construction methods and suitable product selection?
Recycling	Present/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the playground promote waste recycling? Does the playground use recycled materials in the construction of facilities and amenities?
Revenue	Present/satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the playground provide opportunity for the City to increase revenue, either by a reduction in costs, or by holding revenue-generating events within or immediately adjacent the playground?

6.3 Community Consultation (2012 only)

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Through several consultation sessions and a survey the issues and opportunities of the community have been heard and incorporated into the Play Plan.

6.3.1 Introduction

Understanding the importance of play to a child's development and its role in building community by facilitating social interaction has been fundamental to the formulation of the two community consultation sessions.

During two sessions, one Saturday and one mid-week members of the community were asked for their input into the Play Plan. They were encouraged to discuss what attracts and hinders them from using play spaces and what kinds of play spaces were most visited and enjoyed. Participants were given the opportunity to complete a survey which was also made available online on the City website. This survey and the sessions have been analysed to provide key community findings that have provided a valuable insight into the priorities of the Ryde community and how they may be best addressed in the Play Plan.

6.3.2 Community consultation workshops

Two adult consultation sessions (community consultation workshops) were undertaken with local playground users and members of the community. Both workshops provided members of the Ryde community the opportunity to learn more about the Play Plan and to provide their input into the planning process. The workshops sought to capture feedback from community members to inform the formulation opportunities and recommendations for the Play Plan.

Exercises performed at the workshop included:

- A community survey; and
- An interactive panel question boards for people to write their answers.

Interactive panel question boards

The interactive panel questions boards gave the community the opportunity to speak with one of the project team or council representative in person. The focus of these exercises was to capture what was currently attracting people to playgrounds, what was discouraging them and what types of place experiences they desired in the future. This feedback informed the recommendations developed in the Play Plan.

Community survey

A community survey was conducted at each workshop session and made available online. The survey had 35 responses.

The short survey had 10 questions that aimed to reveal what playgrounds people were visiting most regularly and what were their favourite playgrounds. This information helps us to understand why people prefer and use playgrounds and how to plan future playgrounds to meet their needs and desires for play experience.

6.3.2.1 Saturday workshop

A consultation session was held between 10am and 11:30am on Saturday the 5th of May 2012 in Anderson Park. The session was attended by Fiona Morrison and Hamish Putt (City of Ryde), Fiona Robbé (Fiona Robbé Landscape Architects), Nicole Dennis, Mike Harris, Sophie Spinks and Jessica Kite (AECOM). Approximately 20 people participated in one or more of the exercises, with participants consisting of a mixture of parents, young toddlers/children, and grandparents.

Colourful balloon arrangements, banners and chalk drawings were placed under and around a shelter in Anderson Park to alert people of the workshop and to encourage them to participate.

Facilitators roamed around the playground and the park, talking through the survey with community members and encouraging them to complete the interactive boards. Table 34 details the responses provided for the interactive boards.

6.3.2.2 Wednesday workshop

A consultation session was held at the Ryde Civic Centre on Wednesday 9th May, 2012 between 10am and 11:30am. Two Ryde community members attended the workshop, which was facilitated by Nicole Dennis (AECOM) and attended by Hamish Putt (City of Ryde), Fiona Robbé (Fiona Robbé Landscape Architects).

Participants were provided with an overview of the project by Hamish Putt and the value of play by Fiona Robbé. Nicole Dennis worked through the interactive panel question boards with the participants. Afterwards there was an opportunity for participants to discuss their own issues and ideas. Both participants also completed the community survey.

This workshop provided a more intimate forum for community members and members of the project team to discuss their concerns and priorities when it came to playgrounds and play spaces. Table 35 details the responses provided for the interactive boards.

A second consultation session scheduled for that evening was cancelled due to lack of interest.

Community Consultation Key Findings:

The workshops and community survey resulted in the following key findings:

- The most regularly used playgrounds and play spaces were the closest to home and convenient to walk to
- Fencing of playgrounds was desired for playgrounds where risk to safety was perceived, desired fencing included something to define a place rather than 'high barred' affect
- Favoured playgrounds considered the 'adult experience' with access to coffee, a comfortable place to sit and easily view children safely playing and the ability to socialise and meet new people
- Favourite parks included special or occasional experiences like water play
- Everyday parks were required in easy walking distance, with simple equipment and amenity being sufficient for local parks
- Community Park was identified as an opportunity to create an exciting playspace for the community
- People seek 'Diversity of play experiences available' (41.2%) as the main reason that they like their favourite playground
- 74.3% of survey respondents walk to their most regularly visited playground and 20.0% drive
- 41.2% of survey respondents walk to their favourite playground and 52.9% drive
- The main barriers to play were: 'Feels unsafe' (47.1%), 'Untidy and poorly maintained (35.3%), 'Uncomfortable (little or no shade, poor or inadequate seating, no pram access) (32.4%), 'Hard to access' (29.4%) and 'Aging and damaged equipment' (26.5%).



Community Consultation Session in Anderson Park, May 2012
Photos: AECOM

Table 21. Responses on the Saturday workshop interactive panel question boards

Question	Answer
What attracts you to a playground/ play space	<p>Participants were asked to name elements and features that attracted them to a playground/play space. Participants were more attracted to playgrounds/play spaces that were safe in terms of surveillance, fencing and the structural condition of play equipment. Respondents also wanted a place that was close to home and easy for their children to walk/ride to. They also wanted places that offered a variety of play experiences and opportunities exploration for their kids.</p> <p>A park where the pre-schoolers can ride their trikes, scooters, etc. on an interesting and varied pathway that is in full view at all times from a central location.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A tricycle pathway through Midgee Reserve and Ryde Park would be great. • The tricycle path in Blenheim Park should be re-constructed – it should be more interacting and intertwining • Easy to get to and within a suitable walking distance for toddlers e.g. a couple of blocks/250 metres from home • A safe place for littlies that includes enclosed play spaces, stairs that little legs can independently climb up through the use of handles/ poles etc., toddler swings with safety belts so they can't fall forward/tip backward • Enclosed off-leash dog parks that are safe to play and socialise • A quiet place that also has an exercise bay e.g. Wandoo Reserve • A place that is close to home and safe for kids to play • A play space that offers a variety of equipment to play • Coffee shop close by • Swings, slides, fencing around the playground for safety, close to home • More lights – to stay later at the playground

Question	Answer
<p>What are the reasons you wouldn't got to a playground/play space?</p>	<p>Participants shared similar desires, with accessibility, cleanliness and maintenance, places for adults to sit, safety and crowding being common responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycleways that are not visible from one central point i.e. tricycle and scooters (i.e. should go behind bushes as they do with Blenheim Park) • No toilet facilities • No seats for adults • Too far from home • Unsafe e.g. kids can run off onto roads, or ovals where sport is underway • Nowhere to sit for adults and nowhere to tie dog whilst kids play • Long distance to access and lack of maintenance • Untidy/dirty facilities • Overcrowded • Needs to be well lit • Crowding – because of additional buildings
<p>Describe the types of play experiences that you and your children enjoy</p>	<p>A variety of responses were provided by participants, which included verbs such as climbing, swinging and sliding. Two participants cited the ability for their kids to socialise at the playground as being a play experience they enjoy. The need for play experiences and equipment that were suitable and safe for toddlers was a frequent response, particularly with respect to climbing and other high up equipment (e.g. slides).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water play • Nature • Imaginative • To meet friends – this is very important • Slippery dips that are not too steep, with sides and soft landing for toddlers • Swings • Climbing – not high, but high enough to provide child with a sense of achievement • We enjoy taking the dog with us, so places to either tie her up and sit with her while kids play, or enclosed safe spaces (for dog or for littlies are great • Interactive play, for example sand pits, things that move, things that click together, colourful • I come with my kids to the park, they enjoy water play and swinging • Sandpit, swing, climbing, sliding and water play with friends • Climbing – play equipment that is age appropriate for a toddler (not enough toddlers) • Parents love being able to get a coffee!

Table 22. Responses on the Wednesday workshop interactive panel question boards

Question	Answer
What attracts you to a playground/ play space	<p>There were many reasons why participants were attracted to parks, ranging from the variety of equipment and play experiences available, to convenience and accessibility, to the experience of walking to and within a park. Participants liked both basic and interesting play equipment that allowed kids to create their own experiences or challenge themselves alone and/or with friends during play. Other physical elements such as shading, fibre glass slides and bike paths were mentioned amongst participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shading • Pushing a pram • Being able to walk to a park – this is important • It is nice to be able to walk to a park – our local park, Rolly Polly Park (Denistone Park) have to cross Blaxland Park • Walk to Community Park • The armory – no slide! • Windy in winter • The metal slides are hot, fibre glass is great • Interesting equipment – a bit of a challenge, my kids love swings and climbing, things they can manipulate • Kids don't ask for much • Get out in the open air, chase things, grass, uneven ground to walk on, basic stuff • Your mates help you climb, push you • National parks, catching tadpoles • They can be very basic • Somewhere to ride bikes and scooters • Can't push bikes in every park • People put bikes in the car • Convenience – go to the park next to pre-school – attracted by proximity • Can't put toilets in every park i.e. local park, they go home. Hierarchy

Question	Answer
<p>What are the reasons you wouldn't get to a playground/play space?</p>	<p>Safety was a key deterrent discussed amongst participants of the workshop, which was related to both proximity to roads and perception of safety. Parking was another reason which was discussed in terms of the availability of parking spaces and parking limits. Cleanliness and maintenance and the safety of play equipment were also mentioned during the workshop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of traffic, very noisy, close to a main road, pollution • Park at Rhodes – playground next to Concord Road • Regional parks where parking isn't available • Some 2 hour zones can be a problem as it can be hard to get kids away from the playground. Three hours could make a difference, however this would depend on what you do. • Resident stickers i.e. Pittwater could work • Poorly maintained BBQs and areas that aren't regularly cleaned • Regional parks need toilet facilities – not clean, open or present • Unsafe equipment • Certain equipment may be a bit scary and/or difficult – but don't remove it • Parks that are very secluded and feel unsafe • Feel safer if you are with your kids than alone – illogical – felt vulnerable • Can be both too close and to too far from a road • Some things that make you feel vulnerable – how long will it take to run to my car? • Surveillance must be good – who is overlooking – neighbours are overlooking has a powerful effect on how people feel (Fiona)
<p>Describe the types of play experiences that you and your children enjoy</p>	<p>Participants listed a variety of play experiences that they and their children enjoy. Play experiences included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Swings • They enjoy everything • Slides • See-saws • Riding bikes and scooters • Supernova (circle) • Flying foxes • Four swings – hard to get the right combination • Ball games – kick-around area • Picking up sticks (community park) • Interacting with nature, finding, learning

6.3.2.3 Specific findings of community workshops

The following place specific concerns came out of the consultation sessions. They have been summarised under each specific park that was raised.

Community Park

The key concerns with Community Park were related to safety, security and surveillance. Participants stated that there was a lack of fencing around the park, particularly as it is surrounded by roads on three sides which can get busy. One person also felt that the seats were too far from the play equipment making it difficult for them to observe their kids on the play equipment.

Participants liked that the park was easily accessible by walking (for both adults and children) and, despite the availability of parking, they preferred to walk there.

There was discussion around the variety and condition of play equipment available at Community Park.

Participants liked the equipment available, however thought that upgrades would be necessary.

Safety, security and surveillance

- Lack of fencing is difficult
- The lack of a fence is an issue
- The seats are nowhere near the play equipment – too far to observe the kids, doesn't serve much purpose
- Good to be moved – it is fenced but right on Quarry Road – busy

- The back streets are an issue – cars are flying down back streets (rat running) when Lane Cove gets blocked up.
- Back streets – cars are speeding
- Surrounded by three roads – difficult with two (kids)

Access

- Lots of kids that I'm close but not hospitals
- Lots of kids in the area – within walking distance
- Roads on three sides – there's parking but a lot can walk there
- I want my kids to have somewhere to walk

Equipment

- Only park with equipment in that section
- At the moment it has swings, tyre, slide, something to hold onto –
- Needs an upgrade/update
- New equipment

Yamble Reserve

Like Community Park, participants cited safety and surveillance to be an issue, mostly in relation to busy surrounding roads, lack of fencing and an existing hedge. The hedge was seen to be a problem as kids cannot be seen behind it, especially if parents are using the toilets which are located some distance away from the playground.

Access wasn't seen to be an issue, with one participant enjoying the fact that they walk with their twins to the park.

Safety, security and surveillance

- Hedge is a problem as kids can't be seen behind the hedge
- The toilets are quite distant, no direct path and can't see back to the play area because of the hedge
- Busy roads are a problem
- General lack of fences around parks, it is quite difficult

Access

- Good to be able to go to a park without taking a car – I have twins
- It is beautiful, much better than it used to be
- Driven by

Ryde Park

Ryde Park was well received during discussions with the community; however there were a few concerns around safety and the types of groups using the park. Safety issues were in relation to the existing fountain and the risk that kids might climb/fall into it. Unlike Community Park and Yamble Reserve, surveillance was not considered to be an issue at Ryde Park.

Another issue raised was the rugby team training that sometimes occurs in one part the park. Participants felt that it was an inappropriate location for them to train, particularly as it is more conducive to child's play and family activities than other areas within the park. Training in this portion was considered to be a deterrent to people using the park.

Safety, security and surveillance

- The fountain is an issue. If people have more than one child - it is not fenced – needs more protection, it is a bit worrying
- Water feature – a lot of kids get into the water

Issues/concerns

- It is difficult when you have more than one child
- Rugby team training (Ryde Park) in kick around area – it is not an appropriate place. There was plenty of room on other side of the park
- Once the team left, it was immediately filled with people

Likes

- Beautiful park – path is fantastic, can sit in the playground and see a lot

Putney Park

Putney Park was well liked, with kids enjoying the water play available and parents liking the sense of enclosure the park offered, from a safety point of view.

- Loves the slide and water
- Don't need fences but it is more enclosed

Holt Park

There was a lot of discussion between the project team and members of the community around the closure of Holt Park. There was confusion as to why it closed as it was perceived to be a basic, low maintenance park.

Participants understood reasons why the park was closed and surrounding pressures that were impacting on its use.

- Low maintenance park
- Confused about why it is closed
- Holt Street would have been so cheap to run – low maintenance with basic features
- Understands that we need a plan
- There is a lot of development in my area, a lot of duplexes – it puts a lot of pressure on the park
- Put something basic back in the park, it looks like a construction site
- Needs play equipment
- There isn't much else there
- Nothing much else there
- Could put a drain in
- Would have cost – what is cost to pull it out
- Just want something basic
- Kids are from 10-16 years old
- Was dual swings, one rocker, and a climber with a fireman pole
- Old seat is left there but it is fine
- It was well used
- Kids now come in and play in the dirt
- New houses going up in the street

- Explosion of kids
- It is so important for kids to have somewhere safe to play where they are not going to be run over by a car
- So they are not on the Xbox or Playstation – I see my nephews and I think it is so sad
- Could have been dealt with differently - need a plan

Pindari Park

Pindari Park was seen to be too dark and busy.

- Pindari is too dark and bush – no vitamin D
- Pindari Park is busy – the only other close park

Denistone East

There was a lot of discussion around signage, maintenance and the value of play spaces during the Wednesday consultation session.

Participants felt that signage around the park could be improved, particularly safety and directional signage to nearby facilities and bushwalking paths. There was a desire for more positive signage that wasn't overly regulatory and for signs that were site specific.

There was a lot of discussion around the value of parks in fostering community relations and opportunities for social interaction, both for adults and children. Community interaction was also seen to be beneficial from a safety point of view.

Other issues

Signage

- Do's and don'ts
- Public liability issues – something should be supervised
- Information for nearest facilities and bush walks
- Don't like generic signs
- Like positive signs suggesting things you can do
- The signs have to be site specific

Rubbish bins and recycle bins

- In parks – empty as it is maintained
- The little parks you want to walk to is the issue – if you are walking you are getting to know your neighbours
- Ryde is doing well on the bigger parks
- It is a bit like a community watch thing too
- When you have kids or dogs it opens up the social opportunities
- As soon as my kids go to a park they meet someone and learn to socialise – they don't get that in their backyard
- Going to the park is the best, I get to meet other mums and dads and speak to adults – I don't have a swimming pool so I can take them to a community pool.



Figure 52. Community Consultation Session in Anderson Park, May 2012 Photo: AECOM

6.3.3 Community Survey

The community survey was completed by participants at the consultation sessions and made available online on the Ryde website from 7 May - 7 June 2012. The survey received 17 responses during the consultation sessions and 18 online responses (refer to Table 36 for survey questions and responses).

The survey was answered by respondents predominantly aged 25-40 (79.4%) with 17.6% 41-65 and 2.9% 16-24 years. The survey was answered predominantly by females (79.4%). 29.4% of respondents spoke a language other than English at home with a variety of languages cited including Mandarin, Cantonese, Marathi and Hindi, Polish, Croatian, Persian, French and Portugese.

Table 23. Survey questions and results

Question 1

Which playground/park play space do you visit most regularly for play in the Ryde local government area?

There was a range of parks given as responses demonstrating the variety of parks that people are regularly visiting within walking distance of their homes.

Most people (74.3%) walk to with only 20.0% driving indicating the most frequent mode that the community uses to access playgrounds highlighting the importance of playgrounds being located within 400m of residents.

Question 2

Why? (Respondents could choose up to 3)

Close to home	77.1%
Easy to access (easy to walk there, good parking, cycle paths, public transport services)	40.0%
Convenient (close to shops, school, additional destinations)	25.7%
Diversity of play experiences available	25.7%
Other	22.9%
Attractive and beautiful	14.3%
Bike and scooter paths	14.3%
Swings	11.4%
Challenging and adventure play options	5.7%
Safe and defensible	5.7%
Nature play and opportunities to experience nature	2.9%
Good for climbing	2.9%
Good for picnicking	2.9%
Water play options	0.0%
Good for spinning	0.0%

Question 3	
How do you normally get there?	
Walk	74.3%
Car	20.0%
Bike	5.7%
Bus	0.0%
Train	0.0%
Ferry	0.0%

Question 4	
Who do you normally go with?	
My children	54.3%
My partner and children	14.3%
My children and other children	11.4%
Extended family	5.7%
My partner	5.7%
Other	5.7%
Friends	2.9%
Grandparents	0.0%
My sibling/s	0.0%
Alone	0.0%

Question 5	
Which is your favourite playground/park play space in the Ryde local government area?	
A large variety of parks were listed most with only one or two votes indicating the value that the community is placing on its proximate parks.	
The parks that received more than two votes were regional playgrounds: Ryde Park (7 votes), Blenheim Park (5 votes) and Putney Park (4 votes). This is a much higher proportion of regional playgrounds compared with the most regularly visited playgrounds cited. This indicates that people will travel further to their favourite playground, often a regional park and more likely by car.	

Most people drive to their favourite playground (52.9%) compared with walking (41.2%). This is still however, a large proportion of people who are walking to their 'destination' playgrounds which indicates the preference for playgrounds that are within walking distance to home.	
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Question 6	
Why? (Respondents could choose up to 3)	
Diversity of play experiences available	41.2%
Close to home	35.3%
Other	29.4%
Bike and scooter paths	20.6%
Convenient (close to shops, school, additional destinations)	17.6%
Easy to access (easy to walk there, good parking, cycle paths, public transport services)	17.6%
Safe and defensible	17.6%
Attractive and beautiful	17.6%
Water play options	14.7%
Challenging and adventure play options	11.8%
Nature play and opportunities to experience nature	5.9%
Swings	5.9%
Good for picnicking	5.9%
Good for climbing	0.0%
Good for spinning	0.0%

Question 7

How do you normally get there?

Car	52.9%
Walk	41.2%
Bike	5.9%
Bus	0.0%
Train	0.0%
Ferry	0.0%

Question 8

Who do you normally go with?

My children	47.1%
My partner and children	26.5%
My children and other children	5.9%
Friends	5.9%
My partner	5.9%
Other	5.9%
Extended Family	2.9%
Grandparents	0.0%
My sibling/s	0.0%
Alone	0.0%

Question 9

What is the main thing that stops you from visiting a playground/ public play space? (Respondents could choose up to 3)

Feels unsafe (near a busy road, poor visibility, trip hazards, lack of lighting)	47.1%
Untidy and poorly maintained	35.3%
Uncomfortable (little or no shade, poor or inadequate seating and tables, no pram access)	32.4%
Hard to access (poor footpaths, cycle paths and parking)	29.4%
Aging and damaged play equipment	26.5%
Other	26.9%
Boring play options, lack of excitement and adventure	23.5%
Lack of public amenities including drinking water and public toilets	17.6%
Lack of variety	8.8%

6.3.3.1 Community survey key findings

- 77.1% cited 'Close to home' a reason that they visited their most regularly attended playground, other reasons were 'Easy to access' (40.0%) and convenient (41.2%)
- 43.8% cited 'Diversity of play experiences available' (41.2%), 'Close to home' (35.3%), 'Bike and scooter paths' (20.6%), 'Easy to access' (17.6%), 'Attractive and beautiful' (17.6%), 'Convenient' (17.6) and 'Safe and defensible' (17.6%) were also stated. This shows that the destination playgrounds are offering a diversity of play experiences, access, proximity and safety are key priorities for parents and carers when travelling to a destination playground
- 74.3% of survey respondents walk to their most regularly visited playground and 20.0% drive
- 41.2% of survey respondents walk to their favourite playground and 52.9% drive
- These transport results indicate that most people are walking to the park closest to them, although it appears that a lot of people are walking for destination play
- Only two respondents selected 'bike' as the main form of transport and none selected public transport at all
- The main barriers to play were: 'Feels unsafe' (47.1%), 'Untidy and poorly maintained' (35.3%), 'Uncomfortable (little or no shade, poor or inadequate seating, no pram access)' (32.4%), 'Hard to access' (29.4%) and 'Aging and damaged equipment' (26.5%).

Consultation with Children (2012)

Prepared by Fiona Robbé Landscape Architects

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