

# Play Spaces Development Policy



## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide guidance to the development and renewal of play spaces in Campaspe Shire to align with the open space hierarchy, including Local, District and Regional play spaces as a key focus as determined through the Open Space Strategy 2022-2032.
- To show Council's commitment to the provision of inclusive, accessible, modern, healthy, and sustainable use of public open spaces that provide a diverse range of play opportunities that are safe, innovative, and encourage developmentally appropriate play experiences for all ages and abilities.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to Council employees (including full time, part time, casual employees, agency staff and students). The policy is also applied in the management of contractors, volunteer groups, and consultants of Campaspe Shire Council.

## 3. Policy Statement

Council is committed to developing play spaces that encompass the essential elements of social, physical, and cognitive development. Our public open spaces provide locations in which play environments can be developed using both structured and natural features to offer a diversity of play opportunities.

To support this commitment, Council places a high priority on the use of natural and landscape designs and features with a considered use of contemporary play equipment installations to maximise play opportunities for people of all ages and abilities.

## 4. Principles

The principles supporting this policy are:

1. Sustainable Distribution
2. Service Standards
3. Accessibility and Diversity
4. Safety
5. Shade and Fencing
6. Amenities

### 4.1. Sustainable Distribution

A hierarchy of play spaces is required to reflect equity in location and population and to ensure play spaces are distributed at scale to demand and evidence based need. The Campaspe Open Space Strategy prescribes the distribution of play spaces based on this policy. Play spaces will be classified as Local, Regional and District.

## 4.2. Service Standards

A summary of service standards that will guide the design and development of Local, District and Regional play spaces is shown in the table below.

Local Level	Description
Purpose	A local level play space will primarily cater for people living and working within walking distance. These spaces are developed with a small allocation of traditional play equipment and complemented with some forms of natural play.
User Catchment	Usually accessible for foot or by bike, with majority of residents in high density areas having access to an open space.
Types of facilities	Park furniture, pathways for accessibility, a small allocation of play equipment and/or nature play design with provision of adequate shade through plantings, water sensitive urban design landscaping, limited irrigated lawn area for informal ball games and small group activities.

District Level	Description
Purpose	A district level play space will be of a higher quality with a diversity of character in good locations that cater for one of more neighbourhoods. It is intended that smaller towns will be better serviced by a single district play space rather than by several local play spaces.
User Catchment	These spaces generally attract users from the town and surrounding district. Patrons may visit by car, bike or foot.
Types of facilities	Park furniture, pathways for accessibility, areas for unstructured sport and play, diverse opportunities for play for a range of ages and abilities. Consideration for shelter and natural shade over play spaces and park furniture. Use of natural landscape and landform features for play opportunities with water sensitive urban design landscaping. Larger areas of limited irrigated grass for informal ball games and play with area sufficient for medium sized group activities.

Regional Level	Description
Purpose	A regional level play space will provide the entire municipality and beyond and contains assets and/or attractions that are of the highest level in the municipality.
User Catchment	A travel destination for some, access usually by car and often attracts visitors from other regions.
Types of facilities	This space would have access to toilets within reasonable walking distance, BBQ facilities and shelter. A play space or some form of play element might be part of the space, including space for informal recreation. Shade (preferably natural) and drinking water is available. Facilities to support events would be available or made available.

#### 4.3. Accessibility and Diversity

- Play spaces will be inclusive and cater for a range of abilities and needs through design, layout choice of materials in construction.
- Play spaces will be designed and maintained to provide a high play value, incorporating:
  - Challenging and fun physical play
  - Stimulating cognitive play
  - Creative play
  - Opportunities for social and interactive play.
- Play spaces will be designed to integrate with associated landscapes, landforms, infrastructure, and will provide a focus on natural forms of play materials and structures, with a balanced use of contemporary play equipment.
- Play spaces will be sited and designed to provide accessible connections to the range of paths, trails, and road networks servicing the local community.
- Where possible, specific use equipment for outdoor fitness equipment, skate boarding, scooters and free style biking should be integrated with other play spaces and community amenities.

#### 4.4. Safety

- The safety of users is a high priority, with design considering the balance between risk and providing play spaces that are challenging both physically and cognitively.
- All play spaces will be designed and maintained in accordance with relevant Australian standards, codes, and guidelines.
- Play spaces will be subject to a comprehensive inspection and compliance program to ensure safety and sustainability of design intent.
- Incorporate public safety considerations in the design and provision of play spaces, including Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles.

#### 4.5. Shade and Fencing

- Provide shade through approved shade structures or tree planting.
- Consideration of part fencing, barriers, or landscape buffers in situations where a play space is impeded by a water body or busy road.

#### 4.6. Amenities

- All amenities will be determined through the prescribed hierarchy of play spaces outlined in the Open Space Strategy.

#### 5. Definitions

Terms and definitions used in this policy include:

Term	Details
Play Space	A space that includes a range of play features and opportunities for all ages and abilities by incorporating landscapes, natural play elements and/or contemporary play equipment.
Contemporary Play Equipment	An installed structure or combinations of structures designed and manufactured to provide a range of play, fitness and motor skills, coordination activities, Contemporary Play Equipment can include structures and installations for skateboard, scooter, and free style biking activity.
Inclusive Play Space	Utilises principles of inclusive design and accessibility, creating spaces people of all ages and abilities can enjoy.

#### 6. Acknowledgements

##### 6.1. Traditional Owners

Campaspe Shire is the traditional lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Yorta Yorta Peoples. We respect and acknowledge their unique Aboriginal cultural heritage and pay our respect to their ancestors, descendants and emerging leaders as the Traditional Owners of this country. We acknowledge their living culture and their unique role in the life of this region.

## Policy Information

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<b>Related Strategic Documents, Policies, or Procedures</b>	Council Plan 2021-2025 Open Space Strategy 2022-2032 Asset Management Plan 2022-2032 Access and Inclusion Strategy 2022-2026 Active Transport Strategy 2019 Community Engagement Policy 2021 Landscape Plan Guide 2020 Play Space Planning and Design Guidelines		
<b>Attachments:</b>	Play Spaces Planning and Design Guidelines		
<b>Date Rescinded:</b>	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

<b>Approval History: Date:</b>	<b>Reason for review</b>
24/10/2023	The Play Spaces Development Policy is being reviewed in line with the adoption of the Open Space Strategy 2022-2032.  Adopted 18 September 2012 Minute Book Reference No 1257 (Item 4.18) Adopted 20 August 2013 Minute Book Reference No 1041 (Item 6.3) Revised 19 August 2014 Minute Book Reference No 878 (Item 6.1) Revised 17 October 2017 Minute Book Reference No 2865 (Item 6.3)

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## Attachment 1 – Play Spaces Planning and Design Guidelines

These guidelines provide direction as to the general service standards, features, and elements for the planning, design, and construction of play spaces in the Campaspe Shire.

	Action
<b>Access &amp; Inclusion</b>	
To provide safe and convenient access to play spaces and for spaces to be designed to promote inclusiveness for people of all abilities and ages.	<p>Provide play elements for people with a disability, incorporate physical access and a range of sensory components.</p> <p>Access to the site by pathways and connections, as well as pathways throughout the space, connecting play elements and amenities.</p> <p>Including everyone into the space, not just with ramps or specific wheelchair swings, investigate other options; raised sandboxes, high backs on swings with arm rests.</p>
<b>Diversity</b>	
To provide a diverse range of age appropriate play opportunities and landscaping at different play spaces throughout the municipality that encourage social interaction, imaginative play and the development of motor skills.	<p>Provide opportunities for active play for children to test and develop their capabilities and skills.</p> <p>Incorporate play elements that encourage all different types of play; social play, physical activity, creative and games of imagination.</p> <p>To work with stakeholders to create unique and attractive play facilities which reflect the needs of young people - incorporating a range of different materials, landscaping and art.</p>
<b>Community Engagement</b>	
Engage with Communities of Priority, children and schools to develop play spaces that meet the needs of the community.	All residents and particularly young people will be invited to be involved in the development of play spaces (new or renewal), local, district and regional play spaces and any other play space of significance.
<b>Linkages</b>	
<p>Play spaces will be connected to communities by different modes of transport and connections; cycling/walking networks, roads and pathways.</p> <p>Location of play spaces will consider walkable distance of local play spaces and good access to district and regional play spaces.</p>	Providing bike tracks, walking paths and safe road crossings where appropriate to improve connectivity to play spaces.
<b>Safety</b>	
<p>Play spaces developed, managed and maintained to a safe standard and in accordance with relevant guidelines and regulations.</p> <p>Play spaces and play spaces to be developed within sites that meet the public open space guidelines.</p>	<p>Ensure that play spaces are maintained and inspected on a regular basis internally and externally when required.</p> <p>Incorporate public safety considerations in the design and provision of play spaces, including Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles.</p> <p>Avoid isolated pockets of land and areas which have limited passive surveillance.</p>

Fences, shade and surfaces	
<p>Barriers or fences near or around play spaces will be provided only when there is an identifiable risk. Should fencing be required, signage on fencing is not permitted as it is deemed a safety hazard.</p> <p>Surfaces will reflect the character and nature of the play space and meet related standards.</p> <p>Shade to be provided at play spaces, considering the benefits of natural shade over shade structures</p>	<p>Where fencing is required, alternative forms of fencing should be investigated. Pool style fencing around equipment is not encouraged and using a barrier as part of the play should be considered.</p> <p>Appropriate surfacing will be investigated for different play spaces that comply with fall zones and the relevant standards.</p> <p>Where practical, undertake shade tree planting in and around play spaces. The provision of shade from built structures may be considered if shade cannot be effectively provided by trees.</p> <p>In the circumstance of new immature tree plantings, a temporary shade structure may be considered while awaiting tree growth.</p>
Amenities	
<p>The provision of supportive infrastructure will be consistent with the classification hierarchy of each play space (local, district and regional).</p>	<p>Toilets, picnic tables, seating, bins, BBQs and sheltered areas are provided for play space, dependent on the ranking in the play spaces classification hierarchy.</p>
Equity	
<p>An equitable distribution of play spaces throughout the municipality that caters for the needs of each community and provides reasonable access to all residents.</p>	<p>Use the guide of the 400m catchment area and walking distance for a local play space.</p> <p>District play spaces generally serve a 400m to 2km radius and can act as a local play space for residents within the 400m catchment.</p> <p>Regional play spaces service the entire town and surrounding townships.</p>
Aesthetics	
<p>Play spaces will be designed and constructed to provide opportunities for children to develop key skills and behaviours through active, social and creative play.</p>	<p>Use play materials that complement the neighbourhood character, the look and feel of the park with a preference for recycled and sustainable materials where appropriate.</p> <p>Integrate new play equipment with existing trees, garden beds, mounds, historic or other features including signage for storytelling.</p> <p>Use the natural environment where possible, include materials such as rocks, logs and vegetation.</p>