

Surf Coast Shire

PLAYGROUND STRATEGY

APRIL 2011



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SECTION 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Strategy Synopsis

This is the first Playground Strategy to be developed for the Surf Coast Shire. This strategy has the *guiding vision* that:

The Surf Coast Shire will equitably distribute and sustainably develop a diverse range of safe, fun, unique, accessible, well designed and maintained playgrounds that assist children's physical, cognitive, social and emotional development as well as serving as community spaces that stimulate social connectedness and well-being.

This vision recognises the importance of play for young people. Play develops emotional skills, stimulates senses, improves motor skills and enhances creativity and imagination. In modern urban environments, the size of house blocks and places to play at home are shrinking. Natural areas, traditionally valued by children for play are also becoming less accessible or less available. For many children, built community playground environments provide their main opportunity for play.

For the purposes of this strategy, a *playground* is a built play space containing play equipment or play structures that enables or encourages play. A *play space* encompasses the entire play environment including the physical playground equipment and the surrounds which add value and interest. Playground facilities are generally provided to meet the play needs of children aged 0-12 years. This strategy focuses on providing play facilities for the age ranges of toddler (0-2 years), preschool (3-4 years), junior (5-8 years) and senior (9-12 years). Not all playground facilities can provide for all of these age groups. After 12 years of age, play needs can best be provided in a recreation reserve setting by facilities such as skate parks, bike parks, half court spaces and open spaces accommodating a range of ball games.

The main objective of this strategy is to provide a framework to assist the Surf Coast Shire Council to make strategic decisions about the future provision and management of playgrounds within the Shire. These decisions will result in an equitable distribution of playgrounds across the Shire, access for people of all ages and abilities and the provision of quality play opportunities and experiences.

The Surf Coast Shire currently has 30 Council owned or managed playgrounds. An additional 6 playgrounds are located on Crown Land managed by the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee. It is also important to acknowledge the role of a further 9 playgrounds located within school grounds, one of which permits out of hours community access (Lorne P-12 College adjacent to Stribling Reserve).

The Playground Strategy assesses each playground in the Surf Coast Shire according to a widely used *playground hierarchy* of regional, district and local playgrounds, based on play facility and service provision levels or standards. Current playgrounds at each level vary considerably and many require upgrading to meet minimum classification requirements. The hierarchy can also be used when planning new areas and can guide decisions about land size, location and facility provision.



"By achieving the 'vision' we will have made a fantastic and worthwhile investment into our current and future communities".

(Anon)

Through play children are able "to imagine, wonder, explore, create, manipulate, struggle, conquer, discover, practice, wallow, reflect, evaluate, laugh, sing, share, move their bodies, resolve conflicts, to be highly motivated, serious or aimless."

(Reference: Regional Parenting Service: 'The Value of Free Play' – Geelong, Victoria)

The Playground Strategy introduces a new Play Value Assessment Tool which rates the *play value* or the quality of the play experience provided in each playground. This assessment again shows a considerable variation amongst existing playgrounds and highlights what is needed to upgrade existing playgrounds to meet minimum requirements of their classification at the local, district or regional level. This assessment tool is also applicable when planning new playgrounds so that we are able to maximise the play outcome and avoid expensive retrofitting.

To complete a thorough assessment of playground provision in the Surf Coast Shire, a quantitative measure of playground provision has been provided through a *spatial analysis* of existing playgrounds. This spatial analysis can be effectively applied in the urban setting where there are sufficient population and visitor numbers. In rural or semi-rural areas, the equitable distribution of playgrounds is a challenge and playground provision is often dependent on community demand and the availability of appropriate public land.

Throughout the Playground Strategy, 23 key playground principles and sub-principles have emerged and a summary of these have been provided on the following pages. These principles or guiding statements will assist Council to make decisions about the future provision of playgrounds. Also provided are 17 key recommendations for implementation of the Surf Coast Shire Playground Strategy.

As a result of a comprehensive assessment of existing playgrounds, the Playground Strategy recommends a *ten year plan* (2011-2021) including an existing playground upgrade program, a future playground program, a total asset replacement program for existing playgrounds and also a revised playground maintenance budget to ensure that all playgrounds meet the relevant Australian standards for playgrounds throughout their lifecycle. Commitment to a *5 year priority capital expenditure budget* (2011/12 through to 2015/16) is recommended with a proposed budget of \$2,176,500. External grants and contributions to these playground projects are expected to amount to \$622,600 over the next 5 years, leaving a Council contribution to this 5 year priority program of \$1,553,900. This budget comprises a new playground program, an existing playground upgrade or extension program and a playground asset replacement program. A review of the strategy 5 years into its implementation would be undertaken before the second 5 year capital expenditure budget is recommended.

Opportunities for grants and contributions from external sources will be strategically targeted. Where playgrounds have been proposed to be located within new residential developments, clear guidelines can now be provided to developers to ensure that the playground provision is suitable and does not require expensive retrofitting within its lifecycle in order to meet community needs. Community value-adding to playground spaces will also continue to maximise outcomes and provide a sense of ownership and pride in play facilities.

Implementation of the Playground Strategy will require a significant increase in the current level of Council resources allocated to playground facilities. However, the overall value of playgrounds cannot be underestimated. The provision of safe, quality and stimulating playground facilities is extremely important for the health and well-being of children, particularly those aged 0 to 12 years and for all who visit and interact with these community spaces. A commitment to the recommended playground development program is an investment into the future health and well-being of Surf Coast Shire communities.

The Surf Coast Shire...“is the place of well being where anything is possible with the support of a nurturing community...a safe and enjoyable place where one can work, live and play”.

Community focused infrastructure“places to meet...with opportunities to grow, play and learn and creating a connected community”.

Reference: Surf Coast Shire Council Plan (2009-13)



“The Surf Coast Shire will become a leader in providing for play with a diverse range of safe, fun, unique, accessible community play spaces designed to stimulate social connectedness and well being”.

(Anon)

1.2 Summary of Recommendations

Item	Recommendations	Rationale	Priority	Proposed Timeframe	Budget	Resourcing	Key Performance Indicators
PLAYGROUND PRINCIPLES							
1	The Surf Shire Council is committed to the application of the 23 Playground Principles and will endeavour to ensure that all playgrounds, including those provided by developers, follow these principles.	A commitment to the Playground Principles will ensure quality, safety, accessibility and diversity in Surf Coast Shire playgrounds	HIGH	Ongoing	NIL	Surf Coast Shire Council Developers	Where possible, all playgrounds within the Surf Coast Shire follow the playground principles.
PLAYGROUND HIERARCHY							
2	The Surf Coast Shire Council will strive to upgrade existing playground facilities so that the minimum standards recommended within the relevant classification in the playground hierarchy are achieved.	Minimum recommended standards have been set for each classification Local, District and Regional Playgrounds	HIGH	2014/15	\$176,500 (District) \$205,000 (Local)	Surf Coast Shire Council	Existing playgrounds are upgraded to meet recommended standards of the relevant classification in hierarchy
EXISTING REGIONAL PLAYGROUNDS							
3.1	Torquay Foreshore Play park In partnership with GORCC, improve accessible infrastructure and amenities, in particular provision of accessible toilets, accessible pathways to and within the playground and to amenities, accessible seating and tables.	Key criteria requirement for Regional Playground is to provide accessible amenities and infrastructure	HIGH	2011/12	NIL	GORCC (funding) Recreation, Youth and Cultural Services (Advocacy role only)	Playground meets accessibility criteria for Regional Playground
3.2	Lorne Foreshore Playground In partnership with GORCC, improve accessible infrastructure and amenities, in particular accessible pathways to and within the playground and to amenities, accessible seating and tables.	Key criteria requirement for Regional Playground is to provide accessible amenities and infrastructure	HIGH	2013/14	NIL	GORCC (funding) Recreation, Youth and Cultural Services (Advocacy role only)	Playground meets accessibility criteria for Regional Playground
EXISTING DISTRICT PLAYGROUNDS							
4	Within 5 years all of the existing district playgrounds will meet the recommended standards for the district playground classification. A total budget of \$191,500 over 5 years will be required for these works.	All existing District Playgrounds need to meet minimum standards for that classification	HIGH	2014/15	\$191,500	Surf Coast Shire Council	All District Playgrounds meet minimum criteria
EXISTING LOCAL PLAYGROUNDS							
5	Within 5 years all of the existing local playgrounds will meet the recommended standards for the local playground classification. A total budget of \$215,000 over 5 years will be required for these works.	All existing Local Playgrounds need to meet minimum standards for that classification	HIGH	2014/15	\$215,000	Surf Coast Shire Council	All Local Playgrounds meet minimum criteria

Item	Recommendations	Rationale	Priority	Proposed Timeframe	Budget	Resourcing	Key Performance Indicators
FUTURE PLAYGROUND PROVISION							
6	As a result of a spatial analysis of the existing playground provision on the Surf Coast Shire, a further 19 local playgrounds, 1 district playground and 1 regional playground have been recommended to be developed over the next 10 years to 2021. The breakdown of additional playgrounds per Census area is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Torquay – Torquay West (2 x Local); • Torquay North (5 x Local, 1 x District); • Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach (2 x Local); • Anglesea (1 x Local, 1 x Regional); • Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh (2 x Local); • Moriac-Rural East (2 x Local); and • Winchelsea-Rural West (5 x Local) 	Equitable access to safe, stimulating and quality playground facilities should be provided for all residents in the Surf Coast Shire and also for visitors to the area.	MEDIUM TO HIGH	2011-2021	See Recommendations 13-15	Surf Coast Shire Council Sport and Recreation Victoria GORCC Developers Sponsorship / Donations Community fundraising and volunteering	Provision of an additional 21 playgrounds within the Surf Coast Shire over the next 10 years
ANGLESEA WEST AREA							
7	Playground provision in Anglesea West is very poor due to a lack of available and suitable land. In the short term, the focus should be on facilities on the foreshore / riverbank area with good pathway access required to existing playgrounds in Anglesea from the Anglesea West area. In the medium to long term, opportunities for land leasing or purchase should be explored as well as suitable land being set aside should further land development take place in this area.	Poor provision of playgrounds in the Anglesea West area	LOW	2021	Pathway Budget	Surf Coast Shire Council Other Land Managers Developers	Providing good access to playgrounds via pathways. Identifying opportunities as they arise in Anglesea West
LORNE AND MOGGS CREEK							
8	The focus in Lorne, Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven and Moggs Creek should be to improve pedestrian access to playgrounds via pathways and to investigate opportunities for playground developments on suitable Council owned land or Crown land managed by others.	Poor provision of playgrounds in the Lorne, Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven and Moggs Creek areas	MEDIUM	2016 - 2021	Pathway Budget See Rec 15 & Table 22	Surf Coast Shire Council Other Land Managers	Good pathway access to playgrounds. Facility on suitable sites in Lorne & Moggs Ck
DOGS							
9	Council regulations should be changed to follow the PRAV recommendation that “all dogs be on a lead and under the supervision of the dog owner within 50 metres of a playground”. Off-Leash areas may apply outside of this 50 metre zone but the preference is for dogs to be on a lead in parks where a playground is located. Council should retain the ‘no dogs allowed’ regulation in the actual play equipment area.	Inconsistency of current Council regulations with PRAV recommendations for dogs in playgrounds areas. Numerous complaints in last 3 years following 2007 regulations.	HIGH	2011 - 2012	Signage Budget	Surf Coast Shire Council	Playgrounds remain safe for all users
PLAYGROUND MAINTENANCE							
10	10.1 Playground Maintenance Budget- the annual recommended budget for playground equipment / area maintenance including in-house inspections is \$1000 per site for local playgrounds; \$3000 per site for district playgrounds; and \$10000 per site for regional playgrounds. A \$5000 budget per annum for an independent safety audit of playgrounds is recommended. 10.2 Playground Maintenance Inspections – investigate systems to improve efficiency and ability to record, report and action results of playground Inspections	To ensure that safety of playgrounds is maintained throughout the playgrounds lifecycle To increase maintenance efficiency and increased safety of play spaces	HIGH MEDIUM	2011 – 2021 2013-14	\$708,000 (over 10 years) See details in Table 15 Playground Maintenance Budget	Surf Coast Shire Council Surf Coast Shire Council	Playgrounds remain safe for all users and continue to meet Australian Playground Standards throughout their lifecycle

Item	Recommendations	Rationale	Priority	Proposed Timeframe	Budget	Resourcing	Key Performance Indicators
RENEWAL (TOTAL ASSET REPLACEMENT) OF DISTRICT PLAYGROUNDS WITHIN 10 YEAR PERIOD							
11	Within the next 10 years, five of the seven existing district playgrounds will require full asset replacement at the end of their life cycle. This replacement occurs within Years 5 to 9 (2015 – 2020) at a cost of \$975,000 over that 5 year period.	To ensure safety for users, playgrounds need to be replaced after 12-15 years depending on amount of use and proximity to ocean	MEDIUM	2015 - 2020	\$975,000 (Yr 5-9) See details in Table 16	Surf Coast Shire	Playgrounds replaced at end of life cycle
RENEWAL (TOTAL ASSET REPLACEMENT) OF LOCAL PLAYGROUNDS WITHIN 10 YEAR PERIOD							
12	Within the next 10 years, fourteen of the twenty three existing local playgrounds will require full asset replacement at the end of their life cycle. This replacement occurs within Years 3 to 10 (2013-2021) at a cost of \$980,000 over that 8 year period.	To ensure safety for users, playgrounds need to be replaced after 12-15 years depending on amount of use and proximity to the ocean	MEDIUM	2013 – 2021	\$980,000 (Yr 3-10) See details in Table 17	Surf Coast Shire	Playgrounds replaced at end of life cycle
FUTURE REGIONAL PLAYGROUND							
13	Proposed Anglesea Riverbank Playground A unique playground for all abilities be provided as part of a larger Anglesea Riverbank Community and Visitor Outdoor Facilities Project in 2011/2012 including play equipment, design, landscape and public art components. This play component of this project is proposed to be staged over 2 years with Stage 1 in 11/12 and Stage 2 in 12/13.	Major playground proposed for Anglesea Riverbank as part of Master plan Process (2008). Location, visitation and amenities meet criteria for Regional Playground	HIGH	2011/2013	\$340,000 (Shire \$150,000/ External \$190,000)	Surf Coast Shire Sport and Recreation Victoria Regional Development Victoria Sponsorship / Donations Community fundraising	External funding sourced Playground meets all criteria for Regional Playground
FUTURE DISTRICT PLAYGROUND							
14	Proposed Civic / Community Precinct Playground, Torquay A unique playground for all abilities be provided in 2013/14 with a minimum budget of \$195,000 (2011 costs) including play equipment, design, landscape and public art components.	High Profile playground proposed for Civic / Community Precinct Location, visitation and amenities meet criteria for District Playground	HIGH	2013/14	\$195,000 (Shire 115,000 / External \$80,000)	Surf Coast Shire Sport and Recreation Victoria Sponsorship / Donations Community fundraising	External funding sourced Playground meets all criteria for District Playground
FUTURE LOCAL PLAYGROUNDS							
15	Nineteen local playgrounds have been recommended to be developed over the next 10 years to 2021 at a total cost of \$1,300,000. It is expected that \$836,900 of this would be funded by Council with the remaining cost of \$461,100 to be funded through developers, developer contributions, external grants and external agencies.	Equitable access to safe, stimulating and quality playground facilities should be provided for all residents in the Surf Coast Shire and also for visitors to the area	MEDIUM TO HIGH	2011-2021	\$1,300,000 Shire cost \$836,900 / External \$461,100 See details in Table 22 & 23	Surf Coast Shire Developers Developer Contributions Sport and Recreation Victoria Sponsorship / Donations Community fundraising	External funding sourced Playgrounds meet all criteria for Local Playgrounds
5 YEAR PRIORITY PLAYGROUND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE BUDGET (2011/12-2015/16)							
16	Adopt a 5 Year Priority Playground Capital Expenditure Budget as provided in Table 1 (see next page).	Equitable access to safe, stimulating and quality playground facilities should be provided for all residents in the Surf Coast Shire and also for visitors to the area	MEDIUM TO HIGH	2011-2016	\$2,176,500 (Shire cost \$1,553,900 / External cost \$622,600)	Surf Coast Shire Developers Developer Contributions Sport and Recreation Victoria Sponsorship / Donations Community fundraising	External funding sourced Playgrounds meet all criteria for classification

Item	Recommendations	Rationale	Priority	Proposed Timeframe	Budget	Resourcing	Key Performance Indicators
10 YEAR PLAYGROUND STRATEGY – 5 YEAR REVIEW							
17	A review of the 10 Year Playground Strategy will be undertaken in 2015/16 following implementation of the 5 Year Priority Playground New Works Budget. This review will establish a 5 year program for remaining 5 years of the 10 year strategy	Playground budget and priorities can respond to changing community demographics / needs and to future residential developments	MEDIUM	2015/16	NIL (To be prepared in house)	Surf Coast Shire (Recreation, Youth and Cultural Services Unit)	Complete playground strategy review

TABLE 1: RECOMMENDED 5 YEAR PRIORITY PLAYGROUND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE SUMMARY (2011/12-2015/16)

YEAR	CATEGORY	COUNCIL CONTRIBUTION	TOTAL COUNCIL CONTRIBUTION	PROPOSED EXTERNAL FUNDING	TOTAL COST		
1	2011/12	Local Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$77,500	\$258,500		\$308,500	
		District Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$81,000				
		Regional Playground Program Anglesea Riverbank Stage 1	\$100,000				\$50,000
2	2012/13	Local Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$47,500	\$258,350		\$469,000	
		District Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$51,500				
		New Regional Playground Program Anglesea Riverbank Stage 2	\$50,000				\$140,000
		New Local Playground Program	\$109,350				\$70,650
3	2013/14	Local Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$53,000	\$322,350		\$473,000	
		District Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$35,000				
		New Local Playground Program	\$19,350				\$70,650
		New District Playground Torquay Civic Community Precinct	\$115,000				\$80,000
		Local Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$100,000				
4	2014/15	Local Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$37,000	\$310,350		\$381,000	
		District Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$24,000				
		New Local Playground Program	\$159,350				\$70,650
		Local Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$90,000				
5	2015/16	Local Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$30,000	\$404,350		\$545,000	
		District Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$89,350				\$140,650
		New Local Playground Program	\$90,000				
		New Local Playground Program	\$195,000				
TOTAL			\$1,553,900	\$1,553,900	\$622,600	\$2,176,500	

- Note :
1. For the full 10 Year Playground Capital Expenditure Budget, refer to *Table 24*
 2. The Playground Asset Maintenance Budget is not included in the above costing. Refer to *Table 15* for costs
 3. Inflation - costs of playground supply to increase by CPI on costs shown from base year 2011/12

1.3 Summary of Playground Principles

The following principles have been developed for the Playground Strategy. The principles are as follows:

Playground Principle 1: Working with Partner Agencies

The Surf Coast Shire will work in partnership with agencies that develop playgrounds within the municipality as they add to the diversity and quality of playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire.

Playground Principle 2: Providing for All Types of Play

The Surf Coast Shire will strive to provide stimulating play spaces catering for the four types of play (physical, cognitive, creative and social) irrespective of playground size or budget.

Playground Principle 3: Providing for All Ages and Development Levels

3.1 The Surf Coast Shire will strive to provide safe and challenging play spaces for multiple age and development groups.

3.2 The Surf Coast Shire will consider and provide for the key development features relevant to the age groups (toddler, pre-school, junior or senior) for which a play space has been provided.

Playground Principle 4: Playground Hierarchy

The Surf Coast Shire classifies playgrounds into a three tiered playground hierarchy of regional, district and local playgrounds, each with minimum development standards or service levels.

Playground Principle 5: Equitable Distribution of Playgrounds

5.1 In built up urban residential areas, the Surf Coast Shire will aim to provide a playground within 500 meters of every resident in urban settings and provide at least one playground for every 300 children aged 0 to 14 years of age.

5.2 In rural residential areas, the Surf Coast Shire will aim to provide playgrounds at available community facilities or hubs with future provision dependent on the availability of public open space and community demand for a playground facility.

RECOMMENDATION 1

PLAYGROUND PRINCIPLES

The Surf Shire Council is committed to the application of the 23 Playground Principles and will endeavour to ensure that all playgrounds, including those provided by developers, follow these principles.

Playground Principle 6: Assessing and Adding Play Value

The quality of existing play equipment, features and settings within the Surf Coast Shire Council will be assessed through a comprehensive Play Value Assessment System and then progressively improved through a playground upgrade and renewal program.

Playground Principle 7: Designing for Play Value

The Surf Coast Shire will strive to provide great spaces for play that are welcoming and stimulating places to spend time in and provide quality play experiences and opportunities for people of all abilities.

Playground Principle 8: Designing for Accessibility and Inclusiveness

The Surf Coast Shire values inclusiveness and will aim to ensure that all playgrounds and play spaces can be used and enjoyed by people of all abilities. Council will endeavour to provide access for all abilities and to incorporate inclusive play elements into all playgrounds.

Playground Principle 9: Designing Safe Play Spaces

The Surf Coast Shire will provide safe play environments that involve positive challenges and opportunities for risk taking, yet be free of unacceptable risks or hazards.

Playground Principle 9.1: Compliance with Australian Standards

The Surf Coast Shire will ensure that playgrounds are designed, installed and maintained to meet relevant Australian Playground Standards.

Playground Principle 9.2: Playground Under Surfacing

Due to cost effectiveness and durability, the preferred material for under surfacing in Surf Coast Shire playgrounds is hardwood chips. The Surf Coast Shire will endeavour to combine this surface whenever possible with other surface materials to improve sustainability of surfaces and to increase the diversity and accessibility of play experiences.

Playground Principle 9.3: Shade

Where possible, the design, siting and upgrade of playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire will be undertaken with a view to providing a safe play environment allowing some protection from the sun. This may be achieved through locating facilities near existing shade providing features such as trees or shelters or through the planting of new shade trees.

Playground Principle 9.4: Fencing

Full fencing around playgrounds will only be considered where there is extreme danger to users of the play space and in these occasions, playground relocation to a safer environment should be considered before full fencing of the play space. Partial fencing of a playground can be used to limit or deter movement of children towards an identified hazard or danger and should be integrated attractively into the playground setting.

Playground Principle 10: Designing for Aesthetic Quality

The Surf Coast Shire will strive to provide playgrounds with good aesthetic qualities by integrating community art, natural elements and landscape features to create interesting and appealing playgrounds.

Playground Principle 11: Designing for Spatial Quality

Suitable spaces for playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire should be provided where possible with supporting amenities and be integrated with adjacent activities of interest to all ages and abilities.

Playground Principle 12: Working with Developers

The Surf Coast Shire will provide a guide for developers and work in partnership to ensure new playgrounds in developing areas contribute to the diversity of playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire and respond adequately to the needs of emerging communities.

Playground Principle 13: Procedures for Handover of Playgrounds

The Surf Coast Shire will ensure that documentation is provided to guarantee that all new playgrounds handed over by playground suppliers and developers are compliant with Australian Playground Standards.

Playground Principle 14: Playground Inspections

The Surf Coast Shire will maintain a formal and comprehensive system of playground inspections, will ensure that staff are suitably trained in the required inspection procedures and will investigate systems to improve efficiency and ability to record and report the results of playground inspections.

Playground Principle 15: Playground Life-cycle

Playgrounds and playground equipment in the Surf Coast Shire will have an assumed maximum lifespan of 12-15 years depending on location and use.

Playground Principle 16: Playground Signage

Appropriate signage will be provided in playgrounds in accordance with Council's style guidelines, in keeping with the character of the play space, and to fulfil Council's risk management requirements.

Playground Principle 17: Community Engagement

The Surf Coast Shire will engage the community in the planning and design of every new or redeveloped play space.



Celebrating the completion of a public art installation at the Sarabande Crescent Playground...a great community effort that everyone was really proud of!

SECTION 2 CONTEXT

It is important to understand how play has evolved over time and the benefits of play, in order to fully understand the importance of play to the everyday lives of children and families.

2.1 Evolution of Play

Children have always played but the concept of providing a designated public space for play is a relatively new idea. Playgrounds within Australian park environments have evolved in diversity and complexity from simple facilities with standard items such as a swing, slide and seesaw through to playgrounds today which are required to provide adventure, challenge and excitement. Playgrounds continue to evolve and change to meet the needs of the community.

Due to urbanisation, many areas traditionally valued by children for play are no longer accessible, safe or available. Many built environments now leave little or no space to play other than in driveways or on roadways.

Yet another issue is the alarming increase in childhood obesity in Australia, where 1 in 4 children are classified as obese.¹ Playgrounds, particularly those within walking distance from the home, have an increasingly important role to play in replacing play areas being lost in the home environment and to encourage physical activity.

Key national and international trends in playground development that are currently impacting on the development of play spaces in the public setting include:

- integrating natural and built forms within a playground environment;
- providing custom designed play spaces as opposed to standard off the shelf play equipment purchases;
- partnerships between the community as users of the play spaces and the providers of play spaces including local governments, playground suppliers and playground designers in order to provide play spaces that reflect local needs and local themes;
- using artists to help create a sense of place or to develop local themes within play areas;
- integrating the playground into the large park environment with complimentary activities for all ages (e.g. half court basketball, skate areas) and supporting infrastructure (e.g. toilets, picnic facilities, pathways); and
- providing for all abilities within a play space.

¹ Reference: Margaret Cavanagh, "The need to play : creating special places for play", Playground Advisory Unit, Kidsafe NSW Inc. (2003)

2.2 Benefits of Play

All children need to play. Play makes children happy and gives them an opportunity to burn energy, gain confidence, learn new skills, experience challenge, experience the satisfaction that comes when they overcome a challenge and to interact with other children.

Children learn through play. They learn about themselves, other people, roles, society and their environment.

The Good Play Space Guide, 'I Can Play Too', highlights that "through play children develop the qualities necessary in adulthood including problem solving, socialising, independence, self awareness, creativity, resilience, spatial knowledge and flexibility to deal with change".²

"Play provides important motivation for children to become active, engage with others, extend themselves and adapt and learn skills".³

There are numerous benefits that accrue from play. Children's play and recreation is of great importance in their physical, social, cognitive, creative and emotional development.

Physical Development includes gross motor skill development (climbing, hanging, walking on uneven surfaces, running, kicking, sliding and jumping), fine motor skill development (turning, gripping, tracing, scratching and feeling), balance and co-ordination (balancing, swinging, bouncing, spinning and rocking), spatial awareness (hanging up-side down, going under, squeezing through, looking down) and hand-eye co-ordination (throwing and catching, reaching, grasping and holding). These can all be provided for within the one play space.

Social Development refers to experiences which involve another child or a group of children such as in role play situations or modelling behaviour.

Cognitive Development includes imagination, problem solving, creativity and sensory experiences.

Emotional Development includes building self confidence by risk taking and mastering new skills, building independence, co-operation skills, learning to share with others and enjoying laughter and fun.

The above benefits also correlate to the types of play discussed in *Section 6.2*.

² Sport and Recreation Victoria, *The Good Play Space Guide 'I Can Play Too'*, 2007

³ Sport and Recreation Victoria, *The Good Play Space Guide 'I Can Play Too'*, 2007

2.3 Background

The Surf Coast Shire Playground Strategy has been prepared by the Recreation, Youth and Cultural Services Unit of the Surf Coast Shire Council. This document provides the strategic framework necessary for future planning, delivery and management of playgrounds in the municipality.

It is acknowledged that there are endless numbers of public places where children play throughout the Surf Coast Shire. However, for the purposes of this strategy, a **playground** is defined as a built play space, containing play equipment or play structures, which enable or encourage play. A built play space can be as simple as a set of swings or as diverse as a creative combination of natural and built playful elements and structures with no traditional play equipment.

An effectively planned, designed and constructed playground offers so much more than just play equipment and people visit playgrounds not only for the slide, the swing or the monkey bars but also because they are interesting, fun, attractive, social and sensory places at which children and families can discover something new each time they visit.

The Surf Coast Shire Council has, until now, managed playground assets through an annually prepared playground works register, linked to Council's Asset Management Plan. This system was, however, deficient in providing a strategic basis for the assessment, planning and development of playgrounds in new and existing areas.

Since 2000, the playground works program has concentrated on the following areas:

- consolidating playground assets into the one functional space within a reserve;
- improving amenity and comfort through provision of seating, tables and shelters;
- replacing standard raised timber edging with landscape elements and planting for playground borders;
- engaging communities and encouraging them to 'have a say' in the development or re-development of play spaces;
- refurbishment of playgrounds to improve safety and to add play value; and
- replacement of playgrounds that had reached the end of their life-cycle.

Despite the focus since 2000 on redeveloping and upgrading existing playgrounds, there have been several new playgrounds developed by the Surf Coast Shire Council, by developers and by the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee. The new playgrounds provided by the Surf Coast Shire Council have often relied on external funding or have benefited from significant community value adding. Working in partnership with the community in the development of new playgrounds has been a cost-effective process achieving positive outcomes for the community and has created a sense of ownership of these facilities. One of the key successes of community value adding has been the integration of community art which has added unique qualities and innovation to a number of projects.



A local playground in Moriac in 2001



Upon reaching the end of its lifecycle, this Moriac playground (top picture) was replaced in 2009 (bottom picture), creating a new, more attractive and stimulating play area for all to enjoy.

A number of key issues have driven the need for a more strategic approach to playground planning in the Surf Coast Shire.

These issues include:

- The Surf Coast Shire *Council Plan 2009-2013* stresses the importance of strategies to ensure that the planning, design and construction of new infrastructure is responsive to community needs and that Council must ensure adequate open space for sport and recreation and to integrate recreational art and culture where possible;
- The *Community Plan "Your Visions"* (2004) highlighted the community's expectation for the provision of appropriate recreation facilities that are accessible to all community members;
- The new Australian Playground Standards (2007) although not mandatory, provide comprehensive guidelines which set the minimum benchmark required for playground equipment, design, compliance, installation, maintenance and inspection by Councils;
- Access for All legislation requires that community spaces, including playgrounds, are inclusive and encourage participation for children and carers of all abilities ;
- Lack of guidelines for developer provided playgrounds was resulting in an inadequate provision of playground facilities or playgrounds that did not meet the standards set in other areas of the Shire;
- Public demand for innovative public spaces requires a shift in focus away from off-the-shelf or catalogue playground equipment to play spaces that encompass a broad range of creative, challenging and sensory experiences;
- Increased urbanisation has led to the shrinking of backyard spaces for play and an increased demand for community playground spaces; and
- Childhood obesity and inactivity concerns have led to a national push for playgrounds to continue to provide facilities for structured physical activity and skill development.

2.4 Overview of Current Playgrounds

There are 30 playgrounds located within the Surf Coast Shire on land owned and / or managed by the Surf Coast Shire Council. An additional 6 playgrounds are located on Crown land managed by the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee. It is also important to acknowledge the role of a further 9 playgrounds located within school grounds, one of which permits community access (Lorne P-12 College adjacent to Stribling Reserve).

The following **strengths** have been identified in the Surf Coast Shire's provision of playgrounds:

- the Shire has progressively upgraded every playground in the Shire to meet Australian Safety Standards;
- community art has been incorporated into a number of new or redeveloped playgrounds over the past nine years, making these playgrounds unique and adding value to the play environment;
- the Shire has successfully developed a model for engaging local communities in the development of new playgrounds; and
- through the community engagement process local communities have been involved in the development of new and redeveloped playgrounds which has added significant value to the process and a sense of ownership.

The **weaknesses** in the current provision of playgrounds within the Surf Coast Shire include:

- many playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire offer a limited range of equipment and are likely to hold the attention of children for relatively short periods;
- very few multi-age playgrounds have been developed, with most playgrounds catering for two age groups of children;
- most playgrounds provide limited opportunity for all areas of play including cognitive play, creative play, social/dramatic play and physically active play;
- playground provision in the Surf Coast Shire currently does not meet *Playground Principle 5 (Equitable Distribution of Playgrounds)* which is detailed in *Section 8.3.2*;
- some township areas do not have adequate open space to develop playgrounds to meet the community's needs; and
- primary schools are sited in relatively accessible locations in each community. Each school has good quality playgrounds for all primary school age groups but only one school (Lorne P-12 School) allows after hours community access.



A 'Community Creations' project at the Newling Reserve All Access Playground in Moriac



Art panel within the Great Ocean Views Playground by local artist and volunteer, Jane Bailey.

The **challenges** in the provision of playgrounds within the Surf Coast Shire include:

- meeting the needs of the Torquay/ Jan Juc community given the rapid population growth and high demand on existing for playgrounds across all age groups;
- providing an equitable distribution of playgrounds throughout the Shire as per *Playground Principle 5 (Equitable Distribution of Playgrounds)* which is detailed in *Section 8.3.2*;
- responding to demand for playgrounds from areas of the Surf Coast Shire with a small population base and sometimes with limited availability of suitable land to site a playground;
- the need to add play value to playgrounds so that they are not dominated by play equipment;
- to provide access for all in all playgrounds;
- to provide adequate shade protection within playgrounds;
- ensuring playgrounds provided by developers in new estates are of an adequate standard and allow for Council officer and community into planning and design;
- ensuring that playgrounds in new estates add to the diversity of playgrounds within the Shire;
- having sufficient resources to develop new playgrounds that are innovative and add to the diversity of playground experiences in the Shire;
- ensuring resources are adequate to maintain playgrounds to meet Australian Standards; and
- ensuring resources are adequate to replace old and out of date playground infrastructure.

2.5 Playgrounds Managed by Others

The *Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC)* provides and manages 6 playgrounds within coastal reserves under their management, including 4 spaces in Torquay and 2 in Lorne. In Lorne, GORCC currently provide the only two community playground facilities, with the Education Department providing the third at the Lorne P-12 College. Two of the playgrounds managed by GORCC (the Lorne Foreshore Playground and the Torquay Foreshore Playpark) have been classified as Regional Playgrounds given their location, size and supporting facilities and are currently the only two regional playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire. The Surf Coast Shire Council has contributed in-kind support and also a financial contribution (approximately \$25,000) for both playground projects. Although there has been some State Government funding, GORCC has provided significant funding for both projects.

With the exception of the playground at the Lorne P-12 School (at which access from the community and visitors to the adjacent Stribling Reserve is permitted after school hours), other *schools* within the Surf Coast Shire discourage out-of-school hours community use of playgrounds for public liability reasons. Despite access being discouraged after hours, the Playground Strategy needs to consider the role that these school playgrounds play in the overall play space provision across the Shire. The Surf Coast Shire Council should pursue where appropriate, joint use of school recreational assets, via formal or informal joint use agreements.

Playgrounds at other facilities – toddler and pre-school play structures are found at pre-school centres and child care centres. These play areas are not accessible after hours.

Indoor Playgrounds – Other than a few small indoor playgrounds servicing takeaway food or hotel establishments, there are currently no commercial indoor play centres available to the public in the Surf Coast Shire area despite an increase in these facilities within the Geelong area.

Playground Principle 1: Working with Partner Agencies

The Surf Coast Shire will work in partnership with agencies that develop playgrounds within the municipality as they add to the diversity and quality of playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire.



The Lorne Foreshore Adventure Playground is located within a foreshore recreation precinct managed by GORCC.

2.6 Current Model for Playground Development

The *4 C's Process to Playground Design and Development* best describes how the Surf Coast Shire currently plans, designs and implements playground projects. The 4 C's include *consultation, community, creativity and celebration*.

Consultation

Our communities appreciate and value being asked to help plan and design their play spaces.

A *playground survey* has been used to successfully consult with or engage the community. The survey is sent to residents in the community where the new playground is proposed and seeks information about the ages of children in the community, popular equipment, interesting play features, special needs within that community and relevant themes for the local area. Consultation with the community, and in particular, children, in an age appropriate way in the planning, design and construction of play spaces, can produce valuable results. Children have a wealth of experience and opinions in regard to what makes a play space interesting, fun and challenging and may be able to respond in writing or through a drawing, such as on a *'design page'* within the playground survey, or by just taking part in workshops where they are given the opportunity to have their say.

Community

Each new playground project sees the development of a *Community Playground Planning Group* to work in partnership with Council to decide final design, siting and special features of the playground that are unique to that community. Specific decisions by this group include selecting a local theme(s), developing ways to portray that theme throughout the play space, choosing appropriate materials and colours and selecting types of equipment. Involvement in the project builds relationships amongst individuals, community groups, schools and local business. Painting a picture, creating a mosaic tile, planting a tree, spreading some mulch or even cooking some sausages on the opening day gives the community ownership and pride in their unique play space.

Creativity

A key component of the playground development process is the creation of a play space that encourages and showcases the many talents within a community and culminates in a unique, welcoming, social and enriching environment for all.

Creative applications in playgrounds include the use of natural materials, using artistic features or interpretation panels to enhance local themes or to highlight local flora and fauna, the use of planting and landscape features and the introduction of interactive elements to create sensory appeal.

Celebration

A community celebration at the end of a project acknowledges all contributions. It is the project finale that becomes a memorable community event.



Creating an opportunity for the community to have their say.



Local schools involved in developing local themes



Applying these to the playground setting



Celebrating the successes

2.7 Strategic Overview

The Surf Coast Shire is located in south west Victoria and covers an area of 1,560 square kilometres, with some 55 kilometres of coastline defining its southern boundary. As one of the fastest growing regional municipalities in Victoria, the Surf Coast Shire is experiencing significant growth and change.

The Shire's coastline is characterised by a line of settlements hugging the Great Ocean Road including Torquay, Jan Juc, Bellbrae, Anglesea, Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven and Lorne. Inland from the coast are the rural townships of Winchelsea, Deans Marsh and Moriac. There are also several rural hamlets with distinctive characteristics throughout the Shire including Connewarre, Mount Duneed, Freshwater Creek, Modewarre, Wensleydale, Bambra and Gnarwarre.

The Council Plan 2009-13 provides Council's Vision as follows:

"Surf Coast Shire will be a place of wellbeing, successfully balancing population growth, tourism and economic development with the preservation of our natural environment, quality of life and connection to our communities".

Section 5 (Linkages) details how Council's strategic objectives are addressed and explored within the Playground Strategy.

Based on Council's vision, strategic objectives and in accordance with general principles for providing for our communities, it is reasonable to assume that the Surf Coast Shire Council is committed to ensuring that playgrounds are managed responsibly, maintained adequately and developed sensitively, in a cost effective manner and in accordance with the needs and expectations of the community.

In addition to the Council Plan, several Council strategies relate to playground provision in the Surf Coast Shire and have had an impact on the development of this strategy. Relevant Council strategy documents include the Open Space Strategy 2004; the Municipal Early Years Plan 2006; the Draft Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2009 – 2013; the Draft Surf Coast Shire Recreation Strategy 2009; the Community Access & Inclusion Plan 2009-2013; the Draft Surf Coast Shire Arts and Culture Strategy 2009-2013; and the Tourism Strategic Plan 2006. Section 5: Linkages - Strategic documents that impact on the Playground Strategy - details these strategies and their relevance to the Playground Strategy.

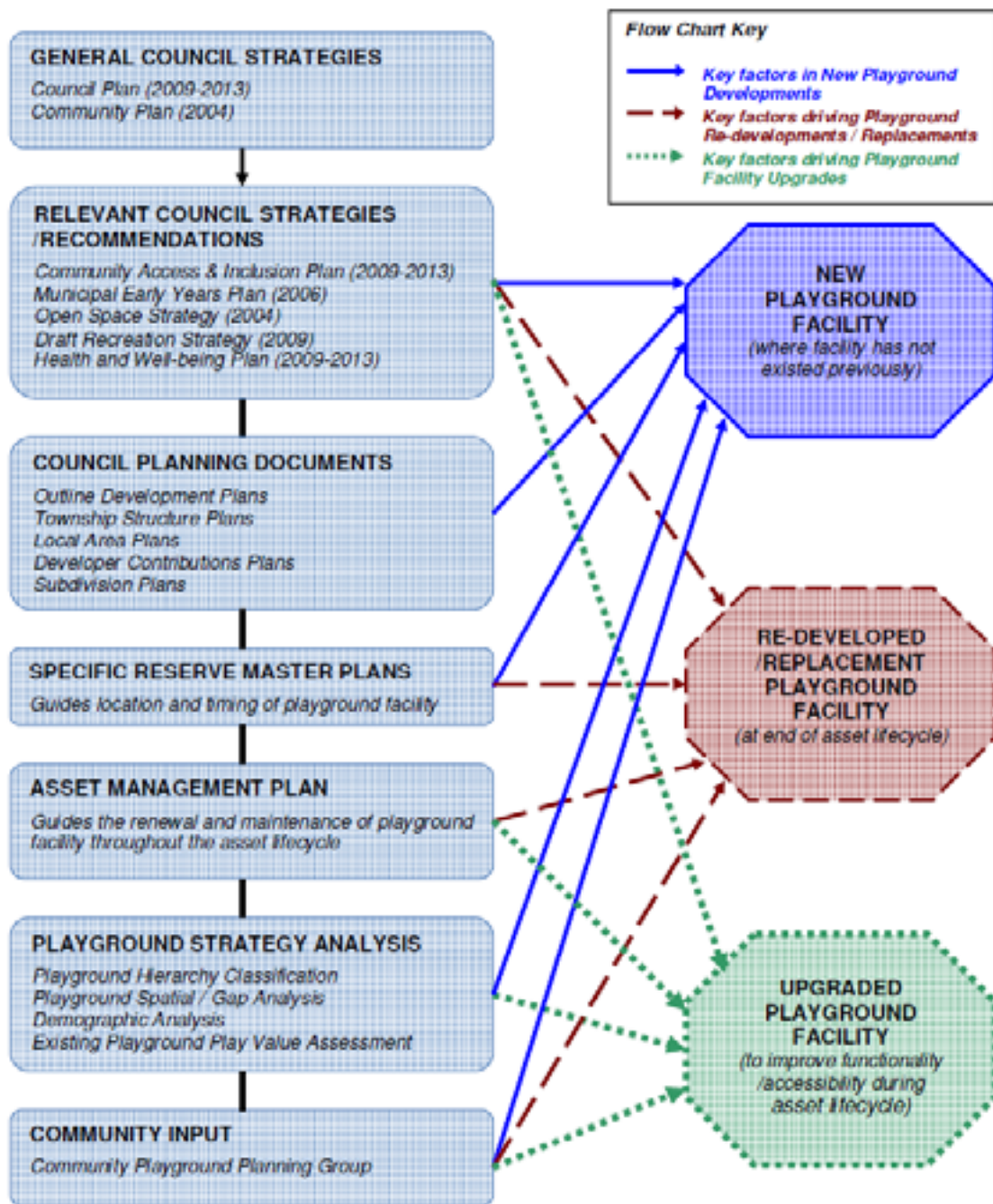
Recreation reserve master plans also guide the provision of new and upgraded playground facilities. The overall reserve master plan guides the recommended playground budget and the timing of the playground facility delivery.

There are several strategic planning processes of relevance to this strategy including the development of documents including Township Structure Plans; Outline Development Plans; Developer Contribution Plans; Local Area Plans; and Sub-division Plans.

It is envisaged that this strategy and action plan will influence future Council strategic planning processes including all of the strategies listed above when they are reviewed.

The flow chart on the following page summarises the [Strategic Process for Playground Planning and Development](#)

STRATEGIC PROCESS FOR PLAYGROUND PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



Flow Chart Description

The strategic process involved in the planning and development of playground facilities is reflective of the range of factors that can drive or trigger decision making for playground facilities.

The boxes on the left side of the flow chart show the important strategic drivers in playground development. The different arrow fonts in the flow chart represent the key drivers in playground planning and development for (1) new playgrounds, (2) playground redevelopments at the end of the asset lifecycle and (3) playground upgrades during the asset lifecycle.

Example of process for a New Playground

The Hill Top Reserve Playground, Torquay

This new playground facility was developed as a result of the 5 key strategic drivers for New Playground Facilities.

Planning requirements of the land developer included the development of a detailed reserve master plan including playground design and the construction of the reserve and playground infrastructure. Council officers had detailed input into the design process and thus ensured that the final outcome provided excellent play value and followed recommended playground design guidelines. The community were also engaged in the process through a playground survey.



SECTION 3 PURPOSE

3.1 Purpose of Strategy

The purpose of the Playground Strategy is to establish a future vision for the Surf Coast Shire and the community in relation to the future planning, development and maintenance of playgrounds.

This document will provide a strategic framework to guide future planning processes and resource allocation in relation to playgrounds throughout the Surf Coast Shire. The strategy will be integrated into Council's various strategic processes and be used as a guiding document to influence other strategies.

3.2 Scope of Strategy

For the purposes of this strategy, a *playground* is a built play space containing play equipment or play structures that enable or encourage play. A *play space* encompasses the entire play environment including the physical playground equipment and the surrounds which add value and interest. Playground facilities are generally provided to meet the play needs of children aged 0-12 years. This strategy focuses on providing play facilities for the age ranges of toddler (0-2 years), preschool (3-4 years), junior (5-8 years) and senior (9-12 years). Not all playground facilities can provide for all of these age groups. After 12 years of age, play needs can best be provided in a recreation reserve setting by facilities such as skate parks, bike parks, half court spaces and open spaces accommodating a range of ball games.

The Playground Strategy assesses each playground according to a widely used *playground hierarchy* of regional, district and local playgrounds, based on play facility and service provision levels or standards.

The Surf Coast Shire currently has 30 Council owned or managed playgrounds. An additional 6 playgrounds are located on Crown Land managed by the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee. The Playground Strategy assesses each of Council's 30 *district* or *local* playgrounds. As 2 of the GORCC play facilities have a *regional* classification, these are assessed in this strategy due to the importance that they play in providing excellent play facilities for Shire residents and visitors. Recommendations are given for each existing playground assessment to enable these playgrounds to achieve the minimum standard for their relevant level in the playground hierarchy.

There are 9 playgrounds located within Surf Coast Shire school grounds, one of which permits out of hours community access (Lorne P-12 College adjacent to Stribling Reserve). These playgrounds are not assessed in this strategy and are also not included in the playground spatial analysis (with the exception of the Lorne P-12 College playground which is considered in the spatial analysis for Lorne). The Playground Strategy does not assess or include playgrounds located in pre-school facilities throughout the Surf Coast Shire as these playgrounds are client based and not available outside of centre hours or for general public use at any time.

Refer to [Section 6.1](#) for more detailed definitions of 'play'.

Refer to [Section 6.3](#) for more detailed definitions of the four stages of play.

Refer to [Section 8.3.1](#) for playground hierarchy classification definitions

SECTION 4 REFERENCES

The Surf Coast Shire has already completed a number of strategic planning documents, master plans, policies and strategies that influence and direct playground planning and provision across the municipality.

Appendix 5 provides a list of the references cited and background documents reviewed.

Section 5: Linkages - Strategic documents that impact on the Playground Strategy - details the range of important strategies and their links and relevance to the Playground Strategy.

SECTION 5 LINKAGES

STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS IMPACTING ON PLAYGROUND STRATEGY

STRATEGIC DOCUMENT	RELEVANT ELEMENTS OF STRATEGY / PLAN	LINKAGES TO PLAYGROUND STRATEGY
<p>Council Plan 2009 -13</p>	<p>The Council Plan 2009-13 provides Council's Vision as follows: <i>"Surf Coast Shire will be a place of wellbeing, successfully balancing population growth, tourism and economic development with the preservation of our natural environment, quality of life and connection to our communities"</i>.</p> <p>Council has identified five strategic objectives, each underpinned by Outcomes, Strategies and a number of measurable performance indicators designed to help it to achieve its Vision. It is through the achievement of these strategic objectives that Council will deliver on its mandate to govern in the interests of the entire Surf Coast Shire community.</p> <p><u>Strategic objectives</u></p> <p>The Surf Coast Shire has five Strategic Objectives in the Council Plan for the years 2009-13:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Sustainable and protected natural environments</i> - The Surf Coast Shire Council understands the importance of the natural environment to the residents and visitors to the area, and is committed to delivering services that will help it achieve: a preserved and enhanced natural environment; leadership and community partnerships that promote environmental awareness; a community that is engaged in responding to climate change; and a reduced carbon footprint for Council. <i>2. Inclusion and accountable governance</i> - The Surf Coast Shire Council is committed to governing with honesty and integrity, as well as ensuring that its decision making processes are open and inclusive. Council will strive to achieve : a community engaged in Council's decisions and actions; an open and transparent decision making process; an informed community; efficient and effective use of Council revenue; sound financial management practices; and compliance with legislative obligations. <i>3. Healthy, resilient, safe communities</i> - The Surf Coast Shire Council believes that the municipality has become widely known as the place of well-being. To continue this reputation, Council is committed to achieving: a place where one can work, live and play safely and enjoyably; a range of accessible services that promote community health, safety and well-being; strong communities that embrace challenges and opportunities; inclusive communities that have a sense of pride and connection to where they live; and communities that are better prepared in the event of an emergency. <i>4. Community focused infrastructure services</i> - Surf Coast Shire Council has been entrusted with the responsibility of caring for the communities current assets and providing assets demanded by a growing population. It will achieve: accessible and well maintained Council facilities that meet the community's needs; infrastructure that provides for the current population and future growth; equitable and efficient use of community assets; and a range of public, private and active transport networks. <i>5. Sustainable development and growth</i> - A major challenge faced by Council is the rapid level of growth experienced by the Shire. Council is committed to ensuring that development occurs in a sustainable way and will work hard to achieve: ecologically and people focused sustainable development and growth; development that promotes a sense of place and enhances the character of townships; diversity of housing to meet community needs; and efficient, effective and responsive Council land use planning. 	<p><i>Natural Play (link to Objective 1)</i> Many opportunities for play occur in natural environments that are unstructured and not classified as playground facilities. The creation of natural play areas within urban environments can encourage imaginative and sensory play through use of natural materials (timber, rocks, sand, trees, etc.). Refer to <i>Section 9.2.2.4</i> for further information on developing natural play.</p> <p><i>Links to Objective 2 - the Surf Coast Shire's 4C's Playground Process</i> has been developed to engage the community in the development of playground spaces. The <i>4C's of Community, Consultation, Creativity and Celebration</i> are further described in <i>Section 9.2.1</i></p> <p><i>Links to Objective 3 - playing safely and enjoyably</i> are also key objectives in the Playground Strategy and are detailed in <i>Section 9.2</i> (design guidelines) and <i>9.3</i> (management and maintenance guidelines).</p> <p><i>Links to Objective 4 – caring for current playground assets and providing assets for the needs of growing communities</i> are addressed in the recommendations for existing playground maintenance, upgrades and for the strategic development of new playground facilities.</p> <p><i>Links to Objective 5 – use of sustainable materials in playground developments and play spaces creating a welcoming sense of place.</i></p>

<p>Community Plan "Your Visions" 2004</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community has a vision for the Surf Coast that encompasses vibrant communities with a variety of community groups and activities, adequate open space for sport and recreation and a Council that consults with and responds to local needs. Families identified a lack of equity across the Shire is the provision of facilities for children, with some areas having very poor facilities. The disability sector identified insufficient recreation spaces and poor access to pathways, parks and reserves. <p>Identified need for a wider range of facilities that reflect the growing community needs and to assess safety and maintenance issues in existing facilities.</p>	<p>The Playground Strategy aims to provide a strategic approach to the planning and development of playgrounds so that provision is equitable, responds to local needs, engages with local communities, creates spaces that are vibrant, welcoming and accessible and spaces that are well maintained and safe throughout their life cycle.</p>
<p>Open Space Strategy 2004</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of providing accessible settings for creative children's play with natural or semi-natural features within a diverse range of attractive settings. Importance of high quality, well-designed and carefully sited facilities in open space areas for safe and enjoyable use. Highlights that through play, children explore and manipulate the world around them and learn a range of skills. Acknowledges that changing lifestyles, urban consolidation and adult attitudes have led to reduced focus on children and their play needs. Acknowledges that children like complexity – a range of settings and features they can use in a different ways (natural and rough areas, water, sand, trees and shrubs, rocks, logs, changes in level, abstract structures, robust plants, pebbles, dirt, twigs, flowers and grassy areas). Highlights that good play equipment can accommodate several children, provide elevation, have connections (bridges, poles etc.), links to other features and provide opportunities for the disabled. Strategy 34 - progressively improve playgrounds, ensuring good access, adequate safety, diversity of play experiences and quality of settings. 	<p>The Playground Strategy has a strong focus on providing accessible, unique and creative play spaces that use natural features and elements to stimulate imagination, the senses and also are attractive places to visit.</p> <p>The Playground Strategy <i>vision</i> (Section 7.1) and <i>objectives</i> (Section 7.2) support the items described to the left in the relevant information from the Open Space Strategy.</p>
<p>Municipal Early Years Plan June 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating positive outcomes for families and children. Council's role is to be a leader in planning for children, families and our community and a provider of community facilities to meet the needs of the community. Council's role is to be a facilitator of improved health and well being for children and families and to build capacity within local communities. All playground facilities should be designed for families and where possible include additional facilities such as electric barbecues and public toilets. New playground design and redevelopments - need to include innovation, community art, Access for All and specific areas for younger children where they can play safely. 	<p>The Playground Strategy recommends the provision of playgrounds that encourage play, positively affect health and well being and create community spaces offering a unique and welcoming sense of place.</p> <p>Implementation of this strategy will enable Council to become a leader in playground planning and provision.</p>
<p>Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2009-2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines actions to create opportunities for all people living in the municipality to achieve maximum health and well-being. Promotes '<i>Environments for Health</i>' encouraging positive change across four environments (i.e. 1. built/physical, 2. natural, 3. social and 4. economic). Provides several actions that are integrated with G21 Integrated Health Promotion and Community Strengthening Priorities (relevant priorities are Priority 2 – Physical Activity & Active Communities (with links to obesity prevention) and Priority 7 – Safe Environments to prevent Unintentional injury). 	<p>The Playground Strategy aligns with the aim to create opportunities which encourage and promote community health and well being through the provision of built and natural environments.</p>

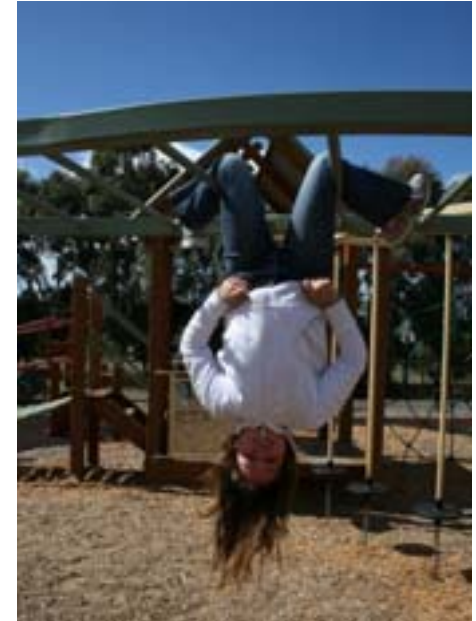
<p>Draft Surf Coast Shire Recreation Strategy 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guides the strategic and operational priorities for Council's Recreation, Youth & Cultural Services team. • Key objectives are to provide facilities, programs and services that enable residents and visitors, of all ages and interests, access and opportunity to participate in a diverse range of leisure activities. • Identifies industry trends for Open Space areas show that there is a growing recognition of the importance of open space together with an emergence of high-quality, highly-developed landscaped areas in substantial residential subdivisions, including infrastructure provision such as playgrounds • Identifies industry trends for reserve development with increasing community expectations regarding the standard of facilities and maintenance; inclusion of areas for informal activity and casual community use within larger active sports reserves; and increasing use of interpretive information. 	<p>The Playground Strategy also recommends the provision of high quality playground infrastructure when provided by Council or land developers. Playground industry trends for reserve and playground development correlate across both strategies with increased community expectations for high quality play spaces for all ages and abilities.</p>
<p>Community Access & Inclusion Plan 2009-2013</p>	<p>The Surf Coast Community Access & Inclusion Plan 2009-2013 outlines Surf Coast Shire Council's commitment to creating an accessible and inclusive Surf Coast. Council considers people with disabilities, and others with access needs to be valued members of Surf Coast communities. For this reason, the Community Access & Inclusion Plan 2009-2013 will not seek to create a new vision for these people, but instead guide Surf Coast Shire Council and communities towards achieving this whole-of-Council vision. This Community Access & Inclusion Plan aligns with the four key principles of the Disability Act (2006):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities 2. Reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining 3. Promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability 4. Achieving tangible changes in attitudes/practices which discriminate against persons with disability <p>A survey by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has estimated that around 20% of Australians have a disability of some kind (ABS, Disability, Ageing, and Carers Survey, 2003).</p> <p><u>Relevant objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure all people are able to access, enjoy and care for the unique Surf Coast natural environment • To ensure all people are able to participate in Surf Coast community engagement processes • To ensure buildings and facilities in Surf Coast are accessible and inclusive for all people <p><u>Relevant actions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 1.1 - Complete the Bob Pettitt Reserve Sensory Garden (within Playground), and promote to community, Home & Community Care workers and Geelong-based disability agencies. • Action 4.4 - Incorporate 'access for all' principles into design and development of Civic & Community Precinct, and other Council buildings such as recreational facilities, playgrounds and community halls 	<p>The Playground Strategy also recommends the provision of play areas that are inclusive, accessible for all and enjoyable. The strategy highlights the importance of linking play spaces to natural environments and features and creating sensory play environments that can encourage all types of play.</p>
<p>Draft Surf Coast Shire Arts and Culture Strategy 2009-2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Surf Coast Shire Arts & Culture Vision Statement.....to create a range of diverse inspirational opportunities for the community to experience, and appreciate all aspects of arts and culture. • Relevant recommendations are included in <u>Objective 4 - Public Art</u> – <i>To develop a public art program that builds awareness and creates opportunities for local artists and broad community engagement.</i> Action 4.2: Incorporate public art consideration in all infrastructure projects Action 4.6: Ensure public art programs engage youth where possible 	<p>The Playground Strategy recommends the importance of developing creative and unique play spaces and directly supports the Public Art Objective of the Arts and Culture Strategy.</p>
<p>Tourism Strategic Plan 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include development of tourism infrastructure meeting needs of local communities and visitors. • Identifies a lack of activities for families visiting the Surf Coast Shire and a lack of facility promotion. • Tourist and visitor numbers are increasing across the Surf Coast Shire which has a major impact on playgrounds, particularly at significant destinations of Torquay, Anglesea and Lorne. 	<p>The Playground Strategy recommends the development and promotion of playground facilities that meet the needs of local communities and visitors.</p>

SECTION 6 DEFINITIONS

6.1 Defining Play

- play* A creative state of mind that happens anywhere, is facilitated by many environments and is not solely achieved through the provision of play equipment. Through play children are able “to imagine, wonder, explore, create, manipulate, struggle, conquer, discover, practice, wallow, reflect, evaluate, laugh, sing, share, move their bodies, resolve conflicts, to be highly motivated, serious or aimless.”⁴
- playground* A built play space facility containing play equipment or play structures that enable or encourage play. A built play space can be as simple as a set of swings or as diverse as a creative combination of natural and built play elements and structures with no traditional play equipment.
- play space* Encompasses the entire site or environment in which a playground is located including the physical playground equipment and the playground surrounds. A play space takes into account the surrounding landscaping. They are public spaces enabling and encouraging a range of play opportunities.
- play opportunities* Provision of an environment that encourages people to play with others and interact with their surroundings. This may take place within a built play space with traditional play equipment or there may be naturally occurring opportunities within the landscape (e.g. trees, logs, rocks or land forms). All of these can offer equally interesting and valuable play experiences.
- play value* The quality of the play opportunities available at a site as well as the play experiences available (i.e. opportunities for physical, cognitive, creative and social play).
- toddler playground* Inclusive of activities and opportunities suitable for children under 2 years.
- pre-school playground* Inclusive of activities and opportunities suitable for children aged 2 to 4 years.
- junior playground* Inclusive of activities and opportunities suitable for children aged 5 to 8 years.
- senior playground* Inclusive of activities and opportunities suitable for children aged 9 to 12 years.

⁴ (Reference: Regional Parenting Service – ‘The Value of Free Play’ – Geelong, Victoria)



Once one skill is mastered on a piece of play equipment, a new challenge is sought and perfected.

6.2 Types of Play

All play spaces should offer four basic types of play, irrespective of play space size or budget.

The Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria (PRAV) promote four broad categories of play behaviour⁵.

1. **Physical Play** is active play such as running, hanging, climbing, experiencing height, agility/gymnastic activities, sliding, jumping, balancing, swinging, crawling, bouncing, spinning, rocking, ball games, skipping and perceptual / motor activity (i.e. experiencing over and under, inside and outside, etc).

Some of these activities are well provided for by traditional play equipment, although others are more dependent upon the size and particular qualities of spaces or other elements (such as the suitability of trees for climbing, for example, or the amount of space suitable for a particular ball game).

2. **Cognitive Play** includes activities that challenge the intellect such as games of strategy, exploration and observation, intellectual learning and games that use strategy and develop language or numeracy.

A play space may provide natural areas for exploration and observation of living things, spaces and materials for outdoor games such as chess and 'tic tac toe', materials and tools for use in sand and water settings, spaces for quiet contemplation.

3. **Creative Play** - includes sand play, water play, play in dirt, play with loose and found objects, music or sound making, and construction activities.

These are not always easy activities to provide in the play space setting but simple areas such as sand or dirt pits, planting around playgrounds and sound features can provide for this type of play.

4. **Social or Dramatic Play** - includes role play (e.g. dress ups, play in cubbies, shops, etc), imaginative or 'pretending' play, small and large group activities and just 'hanging around' and talking.

The nature of these activities varies depending upon the age of the child. Young children benefit from structures such as cubbies, shop counters, seats, small spaces, stages, hiding places and natural elements such as planting, logs and rocks are also of great value. Older children may use informal seating spaces, steps and changes of level or a double swing as social play.

Playground Principle 2: Providing for All Types of Play

The Surf Coast Shire will strive to provide stimulating play spaces catering for the four types of play (physical, cognitive, creative and social) irrespective of playground size or budget.

⁵ Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria 'Play Area Development Policy for Local Government in Victoria' (2001)

6.3 Stages of Play

Based on the four categories of play outlined in the previous section, the Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria (PRAV) provides a development perspective relating to the types of play that characterise different age groups.⁶ In relation to playground facilities, these age groups or developmental stages and the play activities and opportunities relevant to each stage are provided below.

Toddler refers to children aged under 2 years, with play needs provided in very simple settings such as:

- crawling and walking in a level space free of obstacles;
- running and rolling down gentle slopes;
- swinging in a secure seat;
- climbing up and down low level changes;
- rocking with an adult on a gentle rocker;
- playing in a small sand pit; and
- overhead structures such as wind chimes, flags and mobiles.

Pre-schooler refers to children aged between 2 and 4 years of age with play activity needs including:

- climbing, sliding and swinging;
- sensory experiences within low level planting such as smell, listening to leaves, feeling different textures and hiding activities;
- small areas for play in groups with sensory materials, imaginative play props and dramatic play;
- large sand pits for individual and group play with buckets and trucks brought from home;
- a variety of surfacing materials and levels with different ways of getting up and down; and
- large grassed areas suitable for running and ball games.

Junior refers to children aged between 5 and 8 years of age. Public play spaces for this age group are likely to be used for activities such as:

- climbing with increased interest in taking risks;
- fully independent on swings and interest in going higher;
- fine tuning gymnastic skills (i.e. monkey bars, turn over bars);
- extending physical challenge such as hanging from one hand only, skipping a rail;
- racing and competitions using play equipment and structures; and
- ball games including the skills of catching, batting or kicking.

Senior refers to children aged between 9 and 12 years of age. Some activities common to this age group include:

- challenging climbing and gymnastic type equipment;
- ball and team games;
- running and hiding activities;
- quiet, reflective spaces; and
- social spaces involving team work in construction or problem solving.

Playground Principle 3: Providing for All Ages and Development Levels

3.1 *The Surf Coast Shire will strive to provide safe and challenging play spaces for multiple age and development groups.*

3.2 *The Surf Coast Shire will consider and provide for the key development features relevant to the age groups (toddler, pre-school, junior or senior) for which a play space has been provided.*

⁶ Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria 'Play Needs of Children'

SECTION 7 VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

7.1 Creating a Vision for Playgrounds

Playgrounds can be great places for people of all ages and the importance of providing spaces for play has been extensively documented over many years. A safe manufactured play structure within a park can be a great start to encouraging play but the play equipment alone is not enough to fulfil the play needs of children. The ideal play environment is one that people of all ages enjoy spending time in, where children can play safely and children can learn about the environment around them.

“The equipment you choose is only the beginning...the real soul of the playground comes from what you add to the space surrounding the play structure.”⁷

Considering all of the information which has been presented including the need for play, the types of play and the stages of play, a playground vision has been developed which acknowledges the importance of play for young people and guides the future provision of play spaces in the Surf Coast Shire.

Section 5 of this Playground Strategy (*Linkages*) describes how the vision and strategic objectives of the Surf Coast Shire Council Plan are closely aligned with the vision and objectives of the Playground Strategy.



Surf Coast Shire Vision for Playgrounds

The Surf Coast Shire will equitably distribute and sensitively develop a diverse range of safe, fun, unique, accessible, well designed and maintained playgrounds that assist children's physical, cognitive, social and emotional development as well as serving as community spaces that stimulate social connectedness and well-being.

⁷ Rusty Keeler cited in City of Burnside Playground Strategy 2007

7.2 Objectives

The Playground Strategy has been developed on the basis of the following key objectives:

- To develop clear guidelines for the development of new playgrounds with a focus on play value, diversity and accessibility;
- To enhance and improve on the play value of existing playgrounds;
- To improve the usage of playgrounds;
- To develop a playground hierarchy with a clear vision of the function of individual spaces at each level;
- To analyse and recommend an equitable spatial distribution of playgrounds within the Surf Coast Shire;
- To assess the current maintenance and inspection processes to ensure the Shire's playgrounds remain safe and structurally sound throughout their life-cycle;
- To establish a comprehensive and prioritised action and implementation plan for the development of new playgrounds and for the staged upgrade of existing playgrounds over a 12-15 year life-cycle;
- To develop and recommend policies and strategies to manage play spaces;
- To reinforce the value of community and stakeholder engagement in the planning, delivery and ongoing 'ownership' of playgrounds; and
- To clearly articulate Councils vision for the development of playgrounds to the community and relevant stakeholders.



Community and stakeholder engagement at every step in the playground process produces a unique, relevant and rewarding outcome for many.

SECTION 8 OVERVIEW OF STRATEGY

8.1 Methodology

The following process has been undertaken in the development of the Playground Strategy:

1. Review of Existing Provision
A review was undertaken of the current playground provision, processes and practices.
2. Benchmarking of other Local Government Playground Strategies
A benchmarking exercise was undertaken on other relevant Playground Strategies. This review was beneficial as it provided a snap shot of the level of service provided by other Councils, the planning processes that are used and the policies that are in place.
3. Mapping of Playgrounds
The existing playgrounds within the Surf Coast Shire were mapped to provide a visual representation of the quantity of Surf Coast Shire playgrounds and their geographic distribution across the Shire and within townships. This process also provided the opportunity to plan for the future and identify current gaps in playground provision.
4. Classification of Playgrounds
Surf Coast Shire playgrounds have been classified according to an industry accepted playground hierarchy of regional, district and local playground facilities based on play facility service level, provision, location and supporting infrastructure.
5. Development of New Processes and Tools
To improve the processes for planning playgrounds, new assessment processes have been developed to assess the play value of playgrounds at each of the Regional, District and Local playground hierarchy levels.
6. Developing a Priority Plan
A priority plan has been developed within this Playground Strategy. This plan was developed through internal consultation with Council staff and after a strategic assessment was undertaken of the current playground provision and the future needs of the community. The principles within this strategy and the new assessment tools and processes were used as the basis to establishing the priority plan.
7. Community Engagement in relation to the Playground Strategy
A community engagement process will be undertaken in relation to the Draft Playground Strategy. This will involve opportunity for community feedback with the document available for viewing in hard copy at the registered venues for public exhibition of Council documents and also electronically via Council's website. Community feedback will guide the preparation of the final document to be endorsed by Council.

8.2 Assessing Demand

8.2.1 Demographic Profile Summary

The Surf Coast Shire is one of the fastest growing regional municipalities in Victoria⁸. In 2006, the total population of the municipality was estimated at 22,803. It is expected to increase by over 8,600 people to 31,491 by 2016, 35,027 by 2021 and reaching 41,745 by 2031. The average annual growth rate is 3.28%. During the period 2006-2016 alone, there will be an estimated increase of 3,750 households, with the average number of persons per household falling from 2.57 to 2.49.

All areas of the Surf Coast Shire are expected to increase in population to some extent, driven by some residential development, and in the case of the coastal areas, the increase in the number of dwellings previously used as holiday houses that have been converted to permanent occupancy. Winchelsea and Moriac are more traditional rural service centres with good access to Geelong (and now Melbourne) and are expected to slowly increase in population as coastal areas become less affordable.

The Torquay-Jan Juc area will dominate population growth, as it has since the 1980s. The population growth in this area has generally been as a result of the area's lack of physical constraints and due to improved access to Geelong (particularly after the duplication of the Surf Coast Highway). Recent developments adding to the well documented 'sea-change phenomenon', are the release of significant land developments with a good supply of affordable land and housing packages and the completion of the Geelong by-pass road which has improved access from Melbourne.

When studying the demographic data for the Surf Coast Shire, several implications for future playground provision become clear.

- With significant population growth (including the 'sea-changers' who demand a more diverse quantity and quality of community infrastructure) there will be an increasing demand for an improved provision of playground facilities.
- Substantial increases in numbers of children aged 0-4 years, 5-9 and 10-14 years are expected in the main growth areas of Torquay North, Old Torquay-Torquay West and Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach at least until 2021.
- Providing play spaces that cater for a range of ages is essential as is the need to renew and modify play spaces in response to demographic change and to add interest or appeal.
- Parks that have the capacity to incorporate age specific play / activity spaces for teenagers will become increasingly important.

⁸ Surf Coast Shire forecast.id profile (2008) and is based on the 2006 Census results

Detailed statistics across several demographic groups are provided in Appendix 1

Table 2: Comparison of number of children in 2006 across age profiles and census areas in the Surf Coast Shire

Census Area	0-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14 yrs	Total 0-14 yrs	Total Pop 2006
Anglesea	136	112	138	386	2408
Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach	353	333	315	1001	4304
Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh	183	177	202	562	2993
Moriac-Rural East	174	214	233	621	2506
Old Torquay-Torquay West	231	205	217	653	3665
Torquay North	322	335	320	977	4274
Winchelsea-Rural West	165	197	201	563	2653
TOTAL	1564	1573	1626	4763	22803

Table 3: Comparison of number of children expected in 2021 across age profiles and census areas in the Surf Coast Shire

Census Area	0-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14 yrs	Total 0-14 yrs	Total Pop 2021
Anglesea	112	118	108	338	2563
Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach	397	399	370	1166	5476
Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh	170	206	225	601	3566
Moriac-Rural East	185	238	264	687	3081
Old Torquay-Torquay West	413	487	487	1387	7145
Torquay North	695	752	709	2156	10150
Winchelsea-Rural West	184	194	204	582	3046
TOTAL	2156	2394	2367	6917	35027

8.2.2 Tourism Demand

The Surf Coast Shire continues to accommodate significant numbers of tourists, particularly on weekends and in summer, when the population generally doubles. Recent research undertaken by Surf Coast Tourism and Tourism Victoria⁹ shows that the promotion of tourism and the natural attraction of the Surf Coast Shire for visitors has resulted in 2.546 million overnight visitors per year along the Great Ocean Road, staying between 1 and 29 nights, at an average of 48,961 visitors per week or 6,975 visitors per day.

Substantial numbers of day visitors along the Great Ocean Road add a further dimension. The research undertaken by Surf Coast Tourism and Tourism Victoria, shows that there are an additional 2.75 million day trip visitors per year, at an average of 52,900 visitors per week or 7,540 visitors per day.

The implications of tourism on playground provision in the Surf Coast Shire are as follows:

- Use of playgrounds by tourists, over and above the use by residents, can result in significant wear and tear on playgrounds and higher service levels for maintenance during these peak times; and
- Demand by tourists during peak times often results in restricted access by residents to their local playgrounds.

There is extensive tourist or visitor use of Surf Coast Shire Playgrounds, particularly for the large local playgrounds in highly visible areas and the district and regional play areas. Tourist use of district and regional playgrounds can bring money into local economies, can be used to add weight to external funding applications and can result in better play experiences and greater social interaction.

⁹ 'Travel to the Great Ocean Road' Report / Year ending December 08, using statistics from the National Visitor Survey, YE Dec 08, Tourism Research Australia

8.3 Assessing Supply

An assessment of the supply of playgrounds has been done within this Playground Strategy using the following methods of assessment:

- a classification of playgrounds based on a widely used hierarchy system (*Section 8.3.1*);
- a spatial analysis of the distribution of playgrounds within Surf Coast Shire (*Section 8.3.2*); and
- site specific play value assessments (*Section 8.3.3*).

8.3.1 Playground Hierarchy

It is not possible to provide a full range of services and facilities at every play space. Play spaces need to vary in size, play value and degree of accessibility because they are designed to serve different types of users travelling varying distances to meet different objectives.

Many local governments use a tiered playground hierarchy system to classify playgrounds based on the diversity and standard of provision, catchment and level of service provided by a playground facility.

This Playground Strategy proposes to adopt a 3 tiered classification system to define a hierarchy of Surf Coast Shire playgrounds. The classification system proposed for the Surf Coast Shire highlights the different components and opportunities found in the play space, and consequently reflects on the level of usage and the required standards and levels of service that should be provided at each level. The hierarchy does not prioritise one play facility over another.

The **Playground Hierarchy** for the Surf Coast Shire includes the following levels:

Regional (Destination) Playground

A regional playground caters for a wide catchment and provides for visits of several hours.

District (Major) Playground

A district playground caters for the township and surrounding district and visitation is usually for one to two hours.

Local (Neighbourhood) Playground

A local playground caters for short visits within a highly localised catchment and is usually accessible to children from their homes. These play spaces can be significant in children's lives because they visit these spaces often.

The **Playground Hierarchy Matrix** on the following page provides the proposed minimum development standards or service levels for each classification in the playground hierarchy. These proposals have been developed following an assessment of standards applied by other councils, from internal strategic documents and from Playground & Recreation Association of Victoria (PRAV) guidelines.

Playground Principle 4: Playground Hierarchy

The Surf Coast Shire classifies playgrounds into a playground hierarchy of regional, district and local playgrounds, each with minimum development standards or service levels.

Table 4: PLAYGROUND HIERARCHY MATRIX

MINIMUM DEVELOPMENT STANDARD OR SERVICE LEVEL	PLAYGROUND CLASSIFICATION		
	REGIONAL PLAYGROUND	DISTRICT PLAYGROUND	LOCAL PLAYGROUND
LOCATION	High profile playground located within a key or prominent reserve and usually adjacent to a main road	Often located within a large sporting / recreation reserve, on a main road or collector road.	Usually located on a local road within a small park in a residential area
CATCHMENT	30 km	10 km	500m within an urban setting (see <i>Note 1</i> below for many rural and semi-rural areas)
ESTIMATED MINIMUM EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT COST (2011) <i>Note 2</i>	\$250,000	\$150,000	Large Local \$65,000 Small Local \$40,000
ESTIMATED COST FOR LANDSCAPE/ CONCEPT PLAN INCORPORATING PLAYGROUND (2011) <i>Note 2 and 3</i>	\$20,000 If consultant to do full design / development for playground, this would come out of equipment cost.	\$10,000 If consultant to do full design / development for playground, this would come out of equipment cost.	Large Local \$5,000 Small Local \$2,500
ESTIMATED COST FOR LANDSCAPE WORKS (Including Park Furniture/ Paths) AND PUBLIC ART WORKS (2011) <i>Note 2</i>	Landscape \$50,000 Public Art / Features \$20,000	Landscape \$25,000 Public Art / Features \$10,000	Landscape : Lge \$15,000 / Sm \$5,000 Public Art / Features : Large \$5,000 / Small \$2,500
TOTAL PLAYGROUND COST	\$340,000	\$195,000	Large Local \$90,000 / Small Local \$50,000
SUPPORTING PARK INFRASTRUCTURE toilet,shelter,paths,park furn,BBQ <i>Note 4</i>	\$250,000	\$120,000	\$75,000
AGE RANGE FOR PLAY EQUIPMENT	SUBSTANTIAL / Extensive range of equipment for all ages(0-12yrs) and abilities	Play equipment for a range of ages (0-12) and abilities	Basic provision with play equipment for at least two age gps (provide for pre-school and junior age groups as a minimum –i.e. 3 – 8yrs)
OPEN SPACE AREA SIZE	Large / expansive open space for a range of additional activities (i.e. kite flying , ball games)	Minimum open space size of 3 hectares	Minimum open space size of 1 hectare
CAR PARKING	Sealed off street car parking to cater for weekend demand (60-80 car parks) Mini bus and coach parking required	Unsealed off street parking for up to 10 cars	Safe 'on-street' car parking
ACCESSIBLE PLAY EQUIPMENT	Play area substantially accessible to ALL users.	Make best parts of playground accessible / inclusive elements within playground	Some are accessible, depending on location. When upgraded, include accessible elements
ACCESSIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE / AMENITIES	Accessible pathway TO the park, INTO the park, LINKING to the playground. Accessible toilets, drink fountain, picnic tables, bench seats, car parking	Accessible pathway TO the park, INTO the park, LINKING to playground and social interaction spaces Accessible toilet, drink fountain, picnic table, bench seats, car parking	Accessible pathway TO the park, INTO the park Accessible seating preferred
PICNIC FACILITIES	Shelter, BBQs, bins, tables - to cater for multiple groups	Shelter, BBQ, bin, table - to cater for at least 1 group	Facility provision for 1 group only where there is a demonstrated need
SHADE	Natural shade (plus that provided by shelter)	Natural shade (plus that provided by shelter)	Natural shade
ASSOCIATED RECREATION ACTIVITY ATTRACTORS (i.e. BMX track, skate park, half court area, oval, tennis courts, etc)	Wide range of associated activities close to playground that cater for all ages (including activities for teenagers)	Few associated activities close to playground (including activities for teenagers)	Playground is usually the only structure or attractor within the park (usually no activities for teenagers)
CLOSE TO CAFE / FOOD /SHOPS	Adjacent to shops	Within walking distance of shops	May not be close to shops
MAINTENANCE INSPECTION	Peak season – daily Off-peak season – weekly	Monthly inspection (although this may increase to weekly during peak season)	Monthly inspection

Note 1 This catchment does not apply to many rural and semi-rural residential areas with small population densities.

Note 2 Figures are at 2011 prices. Prices to increase with CPI.

Note 3 This budget would not include master plan for entire reserve but rather the playground area and surrounds

Note 4 This supporting park furniture should not be included as a playground cost. Park furniture includes such things as seats, picnic tables, drink fountains, bike rails.

8.3.2 Spatial Distribution of Playgrounds

A spatial analysis of playgrounds requires the following information to be considered in order to determine an equitable distribution of current and future facilities:

- maps showing the location of each playground facility with the general rule applied of having a circle around that space with a 500 metre radius;
- industry benchmarks for the distribution of playgrounds; and
- demographic information from Census data which shows rates for overall population, age group and area data.

When assessing or determining the distribution of playgrounds, it is also important from a spatial perspective to consider regional and district playgrounds as local playgrounds.

Industry Benchmarks for Playground Provision

To adequately determine the spatial distribution of all playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire, two important industry benchmarks have been used.

The first benchmark applies to the spatial distribution of playgrounds and has been determined from a range of strategies that have been researched when developing this strategy for the Surf Coast Shire. The accepted rate for the provision of playgrounds within local councils around Australia is to have a playground facility located within a 500 metre radius of every resident.

The second applies to the national benchmark for the ratio of playgrounds per total population of children aged (0-14 years) and the ratio of playgrounds. The City of Burnside *Playground Strategy*¹⁰ cites a 2003 survey of local councils in metropolitan Victoria which provided an industry benchmark for playground provision of 1 playground for every 1,300 head of population and 1 playground for every 300 head of children between the ages of 0-14 years.

The limitations of using these industry benchmarks in isolation is that both benchmarks apply to metropolitan areas, they only measure against the number of playground facilities and there are no subjective measures of the quality of those facilities. Another limitation is with the use of the '0-14 years' census data, given that this playground strategy is focused on providing for the play needs of children 0-12 years. Many children aged 13-14 years still enjoy playground facilities yet their play needs are possibly better provided by facilities such as skate parks, bike jump parks and youth activity spaces.

In the Surf Coast Shire, the population in 2006 was 22,803. The projected population in 2021 is 35,037.¹¹ Figures for the number of children aged 0-14 years were detailed in the Population and Demographic Profile section. In 2006, children aged 0-14 years formed 20.8% of the total population and in 2021 drops slightly to 19.7% of the total population. The table to the right compares the population numbers with playground numbers to obtain a comparative ratio for the Surf Coast Shire for 2006. The table for 2021 is also provided.

¹⁰ City of Burnside *Playground Strategy* August 2007

¹¹ Surf Coast Shire forecast.id profile (2008) and is based on the 2006 Census results

Table 5: Comparison of number of children in 2006 across age profiles and census areas in the Surf Coast Shire Source: Surf Coast Shire forecast.id profile (2008)

Census Area	Total 0-14 yrs	Total Pop 2006	No of P/playgrounds	Ratio (0-14 yrs)	Ratio (total pop)
Anglesea	386	2408	4	1:97	1:602
Jan Juc -Bellbrae- Bells Beach	1001	4304	5	1:200	1:860
Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh	562	2993	8	1:70	1:374
Moriac-Rural East	621	2506	5	1:124	1:501
Old Torquay- Torquay West	653	3665	7	1:93	1:523
Torquay North	977	4274	6	1:162	1:712
Winchelsea- Rural West	563	2653	2	1:281	1:1326
TOTAL	4763	22803	37	1:128	1:616

Note : Playground numbers include SCS Council (30), GORCC (6) and school/community playground (1). Industry benchmark ratio of playgrounds per head of total population is 1:1300. Industry benchmark ratio of playgrounds per head of population aged 0-14 years is 1:300. Also refer to Appendix 2 which defines the census areas above.

Table 6: Comparison of number of children expected in 2021 across age profiles and census areas in the Surf Coast Shire Source: Surf Coast Shire forecast.id profile (2008)

Census Area	Total 0-14 yrs	Total Pop 2021	No of P/playgrounds	Ratio (0-14 yrs)	Ratio (total pop)
Anglesea	338	2563	6	1:56	1:427
Jan Juc -Bellbrae- Bells Beach	1166	5476	7	1:166	1:782
Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh	601	3566	10	1:60	1:356
Moriac-Rural East	687	3081	7	1:98	1:440
Old Torquay- Torquay West	1387	7145	8	1:173	1:893
Torquay North	2156	10150	13	1:180	1:846
Winchelsea- Rural West	582	3046	7	1:83	1:435
TOTAL	6917	35027	58	1:119	1:604

Note : Playground numbers include projected future playground provision by 2021 by SCS Council (50), GORCC (7) and school/community playground (1). Industry benchmark ratio of playgrounds per head of total population is 1:1300. Industry benchmark ratio of playgrounds per head of population aged 0-14 years is 1:300. Also refer to Appendix 2 which defines the census areas above.

Applying the Industry Benchmarks to the Surf Coast Shire

A spatial analysis of Surf Coast Shire playgrounds identifies the following inconsistencies and weaknesses when applying industry benchmarks to playground provision in the Surf Coast Shire:

- ***The Surf Coast Shire cannot provide a playground within a 500 metre radius of every resident.***

The industry rate for the provision of playgrounds within local councils to have a playground facility located within a 500 metre radius of every resident is relevant only to built-up residential areas. Given the diversity of the Surf Coast Shire population over a range of population densities, it is important to clarify a position for the Surf Coast Shire.

In built up urban residential areas, a play facility should be located within a 500 metre radius or 5 to 10 minute walk of each household and also take into account physical barriers such as main roads, railway lines and water ways. This general rule applies to communities with a concentrated population base such as Torquay, Jun Juc, Anglesea, Aireys Inlet, Lorne, Moriac and Winchelsea. This industry rate does not apply to rural or semi-rural residential areas where there are small populations or where the population is spread over a wide area which incorporates many small communities and hamlets. In these areas of the Shire, many existing playgrounds are provided on a recreation reserve or associated with a community facility, such as those provided at Deans Marsh, Bambra, Bellbrae, Mt Duneed, Mt Moriac, Freshwater Creek and Connewarre. In some communities there has been no demand for a playground facility and often there is a lack of available public open space on which to locate a playground. These communities include Wensleydale, Gnarwarre, Modewarre and Buckley.

An equitable distribution of playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire is best reflected in the playground principles displayed to the right.

- ***The Surf Coast Shire exceeds both the provision of 1 playground per 1,300 head of population and the provision of 1 playground per 300 head of population aged 0-14 years of age.***

Again, the limitation of using this industry benchmark in isolation is that it again applies to metropolitan areas where there is a high population density. In the Surf Coast Shire, Census data is provided in precincts (as displayed in the tables on the previous page) and apart from Torquay (where Old Torquay/Torquay West/Torquay North can be combined) township figures are lost within a broad precinct. Accurate assessments cannot be made when applying these ratios to broad areas which vary considerably in population density and playground provision. Some coastal areas also double, if not triple in population in peak tourist times.

- ***Objective measures***

Both industry benchmarks measure against the number of playground facilities and there are no subjective measures of the quality of those facilities. The value of assessing the quality of the play space is addressed on the next page under Play Value Assessment.

Playground Principle 5: Equitable Distribution of Playgrounds

5.1 *In built up urban residential areas, the Surf Coast Shire will aim to provide a playground within 500 meters of every and provide at least one playground for every 300 children aged 0 to 14 years of age.*

5.2 *In rural residential areas, the Surf Coast Shire will aim to provide playgrounds at available community facilities or hubs with future provision dependent on the availability of public open space and community demand for a playground facility.*

8.3.3 Play Value Assessment

It is important when assessing playgrounds to include an assessment of the quality or **play value** of the play space. Play value refers to both the quality of the play opportunities available at the site as well as the play experiences available (i.e. opportunities for physical, cognitive, creative and social play in an attractive and inviting setting).

In the past, play spaces within the Surf Coast Shire were predominantly pieces of play equipment on hardwood soft fall contained within timber edging. The inclusion of landscape, sensory and creative elements has only occurred in recent times. Whilst it is not possible to provide a full range of services and facilities at every play space, it is important to assess play spaces to determine whether they provide a diverse set of opportunities for parents and children. Understanding what makes a quality play space ensures better planning and decision making about priorities for playground improvements and for new playground developments.

An assessment of the play value of a play space includes the following areas:

Diversity of Play

It is important to provide for the four types of play within a play space defined earlier as physical / active play, cognitive play, creative play and social play.

Range of Ages

Multiple age groups and abilities need to be provided for within a play space and the age groups provided for need to be appropriate for the demographics of the area. Nearby play spaces also need to offer different opportunities and experiences.

Inclusiveness and Accessibility

Connectivity via pathways to the play space is just as important as providing access into the play space. It is important to include accessible play elements in a play space and make the best parts of the play space accessible to all abilities. Parents and carers should be able to easily interact with children within the play space and if amenities are provided they should be accessible to all.

Physical Condition

It is essential that play equipment or structures are safe, structurally sound and visually appealing.

Originality

Each play space should be different with elements that make it unique or special for the community and the location (i.e. through natural materials and artistic elements).

Surrounding Environment

Surrounding natural features (e.g. trees or creeks) and built structures (e.g. pathways, bridges, skate area, BMX track, ball game area, half court, etc.) add to the play value. The provision of amenities (e.g. toilets, picnic areas, shade and seating) are important.



Creating an unique, appealing, creative, accessible and welcoming new play environment at Bob Pettitt Reserve

Table 7: Play Value Assessment Matrix

The following table summarises the play value areas described on the previous page and the relevant correlation to the regional, district and local playground classification criteria:

Key Assessment Area	Sub Area	Regional Playground	District Playground	Local Playground
Diversity of Play	Physical / active play on play equipment or in surrounding built or free play areas.	✓	✓	Provide minimum of 2 play types but will aim to include the 4 types of play in all new local playground designs
	Cognitive play to challenge the intellect (i.e. games, exploration and observation).	✓	✓	
	Creative play with opportunities for free play or manipulation of objects/materials.	✓	✓	
	Social play with places and equipment for interaction with others.	✓	✓	
Range of Ages	Multiple age groups and abilities need to be provided for within a play space.	Extensive range of equipment for all ages(0-12yrs) and abilities	Play equipment for a range of ages (0-12) and abilities	Basic provision for at least 2 age groups (
	There are age / development level appropriate activities for the age groups that the play space has been provided for.	✓	✓	✓
	The age groups provided for are appropriate for the demographics of the area.	✓	✓	✓
	Play spaces nearby need to offer different opportunities and experiences.	✓	✓	✓
Inclusiveness and Accessibility	Connectivity via pathways to the play space.	✓	✓	✓
	Accessible play elements.	Range of elements	Inclusive elements	Where possible
	Best parts of the play space to be accessible to all abilities.	Play area substantially accessible to ALL users.	Best parts of the playground accessible	Where possible
	Parents and carers able to interact with children within the play space.	✓	✓	Where possible
	Amenities provided are accessible to all.	✓	✓	✓
Physical Condition	Play equipment or structures are safe (meet Australian Playground Standards).	✓	✓	✓
	Play equipment or structures are structurally sound.	✓	✓	✓
	Play equipment or structures are visually appealing.	✓	✓	✓
Originality	Provision of unique features including natural materials and artistic elements.	✓	✓	Where possible
Surrounding Environment	Surrounding natural features (e.g. trees or creeks) and built structures (e.g. pathways, bridges, skate area, BMX track, ball game area, half court, etc.).	Wide range of associated activities close to playground	Range of associated activities close to playground	Few associated activities close to playground
	Provision of amenities (e.g. toilets, picnic areas, shade and seating).	✓	✓	✓

Play Value Assessment System

There is considerable variation amongst existing playgrounds in the Shire and an assessment of the play value of the playground and play space is aimed at highlighting what is needed to upgrade existing playgrounds to meet minimum requirements and ultimately to raise the standard of these spaces which are so highly valued by the community. An assessment of play value is also applicable when planning new playgrounds so that the play outcome is maximised and expensive retrofitting is avoided.

Using the Play Value Assessment Matrix on the previous page, a new Play Value Assessment System has been developed to assess the play value of Surf Coast Shire playgrounds. This system uses the play value areas and sub areas provided in the Play Value Assessment Matrix to assess each playground using a rating and point system as follows:

<u>Good</u> (significantly meets the play value assessment criteria)	3 points
<u>Fair</u> (partially meets the play value assessment criteria)	2 points
<u>Poor</u> (fails to meet the play value assessment criteria)	1 point

When this point system is used to assess all of the areas discussed above for each playground at each level in the playground hierarchy, priorities for upgrade can then be determined. Using the Play Value Assessment System (with a total possible score of 57 at both the district and local level) playgrounds with a low rating of 30 or less will be high priorities for upgrade, those that have a medium rating of between 31 and 44 will be medium priorities and those that have a high rating of 45 or above will be low priorities. Regional playgrounds are not assessed using the Play Value Assessment System as the only 2 existing regional playgrounds are managed by the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC).

The following table simplifies how priorities will be determined:

Rating score	Priority	Recommended Time Frame
30 or less	High	1 - 2 years
31 to 44	Medium	3 - 4 years
45 or above	Low	5 - 6 years

Note : during this time, some of the play structures may have been replaced at the end of their life cycle, giving an opportunity to change components of the play value

When a playground is assessed and rated, considerations are made regarding its classification within the hierarchy of provision (regional, district or local) and its location in the Shire and relationship to other playgrounds.

Playground Principle 6: Assessing and Adding Play Value

The quality of existing play equipment, features and settings within the Surf Coast Shire Council will be assessed through a comprehensive Play Value Assessment System and then progressively improved through a playground upgrade and renewal program.

SECTION 9 STRATEGY ELEMENTS

9.1 Playground Hierarchy Assessment of Existing Playgrounds

The Playground Hierarchy Matrix (*introduced in the previous Section 8.3.1*), highlights the different components and opportunities found in the play space, and consequently reflects on the level of usage and the required standards and levels of service that should be provided at the regional, district and local level. It is not possible to provide a full range of services and facilities at every play space. Play spaces need to vary in size, play value and degree of accessibility because they are designed to serve different types of users travelling varying distances to meet different objectives.

The existing playgrounds within the Surf Coast Shire have been classified using the Regional, District and Local Playground Hierarchy and then assessed according to how they perform within their classification level.

Regional Playgrounds

There are only two existing **regional** playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire and both are managed by the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC).

The Torquay Foreshore Playpark and the Lorne Foreshore Playground meet the required Regional Playground standards recommended in this strategy, except for the provision of accessible infrastructure and amenities. Both playgrounds however, have unique pieces of inclusive play equipment or play structures, resulting in a high priority need for the provision of accessible infrastructure and amenities.

In order to achieve the standard required as a Regional Playground, the Torquay Foreshore Playpark requires accessible pathways to the playground and accessible pathways into and within the playground. The existing toilet facility needs to be upgraded to include a unisex accessible toilet. General park furniture within the park requires upgrading to include accessible items such as drink fountains, picnic tables and bench seats. Accessible car parking as close as possible to the playground area is required with accessible pathway links to the playground and social spaces.

The Lorne Foreshore Playground requires accessible pathways to the playground and accessible pathways into and within the playground. The existing toilet facility needs to be upgraded to include a unisex accessible toilet. General park furniture within the park requires upgrading to include accessible items such as drink fountains, picnic tables and bench seats. Accessible car parking as close as possible to the playground area is required with accessible pathway links to the playground and social spaces.

RECOMMENDATION 2

PLAYGROUND HIERARCHY

The Surf Coast Shire Council will strive to upgrade existing playground facilities so that the minimum standards recommended within the relevant classification in the playground hierarchy are achieved.

EXISTING REGIONAL PLAYGROUNDS

RECOMMENDATION 3.1

*Torquay Foreshore Playpark
In partnership with GORCC, improve accessible infrastructure and amenities, in particular provision of accessible toilets, accessible pathways to and within the playground and to amenities, accessible seating and tables.*

RECOMMENDATION 3.2

*Lorne Foreshore Playground
In partnership with GORCC, improve accessible infrastructure and amenities, in particular accessible pathways to and within the playground and to amenities, accessible seating and tables.*

Regional Playgrounds

TABLE 8: COMPARING THE TWO EXISTING REGIONAL PLAYGROUNDS IN THE SHIRE (MANAGED BY GORCC) TO THE REQUIRED STANDARDS FOR THIS CLASSIFICATION

MINIMUM DEVELOPMENT STANDARD OR SERVICE LEVEL CATEGORY	REGIONAL PLAYGROUND CHARACTERISTICS	Torquay Foreshore Play Park	Lorne Foreshore Playground
LOCATION	High profile playground located within a key or prominent reserve and usually adjacent to a main road	✓	✓
CATCHMENT	30 km	✓	✓
ESTIMATED MINIMUM EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT COST (2011)	\$250,000	✓	✓
ESTIMATED COST FOR LANDSCAPE/ CONCEPT PLAN INCORPORATING PLAYGROUND (2011)	\$20,000	✓	✓
ESTIMATED COST FOR LANDSCAPE WORKS (Including Park Furniture/ Paths) AND PUBLIC ART WORKS (2011)	Landscape \$50,000 Public Art / Features \$20,000	✓	✓
TOTAL PLAYGROUND COST (inclusive of items above)	\$340,000		
SUPPORTING PARK INFRASTRUCTURE (toilet, shelter, pathways, park furn, BBQ)	\$250,000	✓	✓
AGE RANGE FOR PLAY EQUIPMENT	SUBSTANTIAL / Extensive range of equipment for all ages(0-12yrs) and abilities	✓	✓
OPEN SPACE AREA SIZE	Large / expansive open space for a range of additional activities (i.e. kite flying , ball games)	✓	✓
CAR PARKING	Sealed off street car parking to cater for weekend demand (60-80 car parks) Mini bus and coach parking required	✓ ✓	✓ ✓
ACCESSIBLE PLAY EQUIPMENT	Play area substantially accessible to ALL users.	✓	✓
ACCESSIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE / AMENITIES	Accessible pathway TO the park, INTO the park, LINKING to the playground. Accessible toilets, drink fountain, picnic tables, bench seats, car parking	X X	X X
PICNIC FACILITIES	Shelter, BBQ's, bins, tables - to cater for multiple groups	✓	✓
SHADE	Natural shade (plus that provided by shelter)	✓	✓
ASSOCIATED RECREATION ACTIVITY ATTRACTORS (i.e. BMX track, skate park, half court area, oval, tennis courts, etc)	Wide range of associated activities close to playground that cater for all ages (including activities for teenagers)	✓	✓
CLOSE TO CAFE / FOOD /SHOPS	Adjacent to shops	✓	✓
MAINTENANCE INSPECTION	Peak season – daily Off-peak season - at least 3x week	✓	✓
Comments		Managed by GORCC	Managed by GORCC

District Playgrounds

There are seven existing **district** playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire, all of which are managed by the Surf Coast Shire Council.

These district playgrounds vary in the extent to which they achieve the recommended standards for playgrounds at this level in the playground hierarchy. The table on the following page indicates where the seven district playgrounds fall short of the recommended district playground standards.

A summary of the recommended works required for each of the seven district playgrounds to achieve the recommended standards at this level in the playground hierarchy and the budget for these works is provided in **Table 19** in *Section 10*. It is recommended that these works be progressively carried out in Years 1 to 4 with a total budget of \$176,500. Five of the seven existing district playgrounds will require full asset replacement within Years 5 – 9.

Once these playgrounds achieve the minimum recommended standards as district playgrounds, it is important to ensure that these facilities continue to respond to changing community needs and become interesting and challenging for children. Given that the standard lifecycle of a play facility is 15 years, it is important that Council resourcing of the facility goes beyond routine maintenance and repair.

Examples of playground upgrade works are improvements to accessibility (with equipment and amenities), inclusion or renewal of public art, playground area edge treatment (using rocks and planted mounds to 'soften' the playground footprint), planting of shade trees and the installation of additional play elements to add variety, interest and challenge.

Further detail on the entire works program for all playgrounds is provided in *Section 10: Resourcing : Priority Plan and Financial Implications*.

Winchelsea Riverbank Playground ready for an opening celebration in 2001. 8 years later it is still very much loved by the community.

As a district playground it needs some improvement and upgrade to ensure that it meets the recommended standards for that classification and also so that it continues to service local and visitor needs.



RECOMMENDATION 4

EXISTING DISTRICT PLAYGROUNDS

Within 5 years all of the existing district playgrounds will meet the recommended standards for the district playground classification. A total budget of \$176,500 over 5 years will be required for these works.

District Playgrounds

TABLE 9: COMPARING THE SEVEN EXISTING DISTRICT PLAYGROUNDS IN THE SHIRE TO THE REQUIRED STANDARDS FOR THIS CLASSIFICATION

MINIMUM DEVELOPMENT STANDARD OR SERVICE LEVEL CATEGORY	DISTRICT PLAYGROUND CHARACTERISTICS	PLAYGROUND						
		MORUAC ALL ACCESS	WINCHELSEA RIVERBANK	COOGEORAH PARK ANGLESEA	AIREYS INLET RESERVE	BELLBRAE RESERVE	DEANS MARSH	BOB PETTIT RESERVE
LOCATION	Often located within a large sporting / recreation reserve, on a main road or collector road.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CATCHMENT	10 km	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ESTIMATED MINIMUM EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT COST (2011)	\$150,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ESTIMATED COST FOR LANDSCAPE/ CONCEPT PLAN INCORPORATING PLAYGROUND (2011)	\$10,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ESTIMATED COST FOR LANDSCAPE WORKS (Including Park Furniture/ Paths) AND PUBLIC ART WORKS (2011)	Landscape \$25,000 Public Art / Features \$10,000	✓ ✓	X \$7,500 required X \$2,000 required	X \$2,500 required ✓	X \$12,500 required X \$5,000 required	✓ ✓	X \$7,500 required ✓	✓ \$10,000 required
TOTAL PLAYGROUND COST	\$195,000							
SUPPORTING PARK INFRASTRUCTURE (toilet, shelter, pathways, park furn, BBQ)	\$120,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
AGE RANGE FOR PLAY EQUIPMENT	Play equipment for a range of ages (0-12) and abilities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
OPEN SPACE AREA SIZE	Minimum open space size of 6000m2 (SEE OPEN SPACE GUIDELINES)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CAR PARKING	Unsealed off street parking for up to 10 cars	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓
ACCESSIBLE PLAY EQUIPMENT	Make the best parts of the playground accessible Inclusive elements contained within playground	✓ ✓	X \$5,000 required X \$5,000 required	X \$5,000 required X \$5,000 required	X \$5,000 required X \$5,000 required	X \$5,000 required X \$5,000 required	X \$5,000 required X \$5,000 required	✓ X \$10,000 required
ACCESSIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE / AMENITIES	Accessible pathway TO the park, INTO the park, LINKING to playground and social interaction spaces Accessible toilet, drink fountain, picnic table, bench seats, car parking	✓ ✓	X \$10,000 required X \$10,000 required	X \$10,000 required ✓	X \$5,000 required ✓	X \$10,000 required ✓	X \$10,000 required X \$10,000 required	✓ ✓
PICNIC FACILITIES	Shelter, BBQ, bin, table - to cater for at least 1 group	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SHADE	Natural shade (plus that provided by shelter)	Limited - \$1,500 required	✓	✓	Limited - \$1,500 required	✓	Limited - \$1,500 required	✓
ASSOCIATED RECREATION ACTIVITY ATTRACTORS (i.e. BMX track, skate park, half court area, oval, tennis courts, etc)	Few associated activities close to playground (including activities for teenagers)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CLOSE TO CAFE / FOOD /SHOPS	Within walking distance of shops	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MAINTENANCE INSPECTION	Monthly inspection (may be weekly at peak times)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Comments		SCS	SCS	SCS	SCS	SCS	SCS	SCS

Local Playgrounds

The Surf Coast Shire Council manage 23 existing **local** playgrounds. Local playgrounds managed by GORCC (4) and the Education Department (1) are not assessed in this strategy. The local playgrounds vary in the extent to which they achieve the recommended standards for playgrounds at this level in the playground hierarchy. The table on the following page recommends the areas in which the 23 local playgrounds can be upgraded to meet minimum recommended local playground standards.

A summary of the works required for each of the 23 local playgrounds to achieve the recommended standards at this level in the playground hierarchy is provided in **Table 20** in *Section 10*. It is recommended that these works be progressively carried out in Years 1 to 4 with a total budget of \$205,000. 14 of the 23 existing local playgrounds will require full asset replacement within Years 3 – 10.

As is the case with district and regional playgrounds, once these local playgrounds achieve the minimum recommended standards for their classification, it is important to ensure that these facilities continue to respond to changing community needs and become interesting and challenging for children. Given that the standard lifecycle of a play facility is 15 years, it is important that Council resourcing of the facility goes beyond routine maintenance and repair.

Examples of playground upgrade works are improvements to accessibility (with equipment and amenities), inclusion or renewal of public art, playground area edge treatment (using rocks and planted mounds to 'soften' the playground footprint), planting of shade trees and the installation of additional play elements to add variety, interest and challenge.

Further detail on the entire works program for all playgrounds is provided in *Section 10: Resourcing: Priority Plan and Financial Implications*.



The installation of elements such as public art and landscaping can re-invigorate a 'tired' play space so that it can re-engage and excite regular visitors to the facility.

The Aireys Inlet Reserve playground is a great example where the Aireys Inlet Primary School students and teachers worked with local artists to create a beautiful art installation to add interest and appeal to the existing playground area.

RECOMMENDATION 5

EXISTING LOCAL PLAYGROUNDS

Within 5 years all of the existing local playgrounds will meet the recommended standards for the local playground classification. A total budget of \$205,500 over 5 years will be required for these works.

Local Playgrounds

Table 12: How the 23 existing local playgrounds in the Shire compare to the required standards for this classification
 (Please note that an assessment of the local classification for the Lorne P-12 and the 4 GORCC local playgrounds has not been included)

MINIMUM DEVELOPMENT STANDARD OR SERVICE LEVEL CATEGORY	LOCAL PLAYGROUND CHARACTERISTICS	PLAYGROUND																						
		DEEP CREEK RESERVE	ST ANNE'S RESERVE	QUAY RESERVE	SARABANDE CRESCENT	GREAT OCEAN VIEWS	OCEAN ACRES	FROG HOLLOW	JAN JUC CREEK	TORQUAY BLVD	BOB PETTIT PAVILION	ANGLESEA TENNIS	ANGLESEA LIONS PARK	BARK HUT RESERVE	A1 COMM CENTRE	BAMBRA HALL /	WINCHELSEA DWYER ST	MT MORIAC RESERVE	CLERKE CRT MORIAC	MORIAC COMM CENTRE	FRESHWATER CREEK	KALKARRA RESERVE	CONNEMARRE RESERVE	HILL TOP RESERVE
LOCATION	Usually located on a local road within a small park in a residential area	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CATCHMENT	500m within an urban setting (see Note 1 below for rural and semi-rural areas)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ESTIMATED MINIMUM EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT COST (2011)	Large Local \$65,000 Small Local \$40,000	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ESTIMATED COST FOR LANDSCAPE/ CONCEPT PLAN INCORPORATING PLAYGROUND (2011)	Large Local \$5,000 Small Local \$2,500	X	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
ESTIMATED COST FOR LANDSCAPE WORKS (Including Park Furniture/ Paths) AND PUBLIC ART WORKS (2011)	Landscape : Lge \$15,000 / Sm \$5,000 Public Art / Features : Large \$5,000 / Small \$2,500	X	X	X	✓	X	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	✓
TOTAL PLAYGROUND COST (inclusive of items above)	Large Local \$90,000 Small Local \$50,000																							
SUPPORTING PARK INFRASTRUCTURE (pathways,park furn, BBQ)	\$75,000	X	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓
AGE RANGE FOR PLAY EQUIPMENT	Basic provision with play equipment for at least two age groups (most provide for pre-school and junior age groups as a minimum -i.e. 3 – 8yrs)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
OPEN SPACE AREA SIZE	Minimum open space size of 3000m2 (SEE OPEN SPACE GUIDELINES)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CAR PARKING	Safe on street car parking	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ACCESSIBLE PLAY EQUIPMENT	Some are accessible, depending on location. When upgraded, include accessible elements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ACCESSIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE / AMENITIES	Accessible pathway TO the park, INTO the park Accessible seating preferred	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
PICNIC FACILITIES	Facility provision for 1 group only where there is a demonstrated need	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SHADE	Natural shade	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ASSOCIATED RECREATION ACTIVITY ATTRACTORS (i.e. BMX track, skate park, half court area, oval, tennis courts, etc)	Playground is usually the only structure or attractor within the park (usually no activities for teenagers)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CLOSE TO CAFE / FOOD /SHOPS	May not be close to shops	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MAINTENANCE INSPECTION	Monthly inspection	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

9.2 Spatial / Gap Analysis of Playgrounds

Section 8.3 provides the background information leading to the development of *Principle 5* for Surf Coast Shire playgrounds (*Equitable Distribution of Playgrounds*). The following analysis reflects this important playground principle.

Section 8.3.2 (Assessment of Supply: Spatial Distribution of Playgrounds) describes in detail the inconsistencies and weaknesses when applying industry benchmarks to playground provision in the Surf Coast Shire:

- *The Surf Coast Shire cannot provide a playground within a 500 metre radius of every resident.*

This provision should be achievable in built up urban residential areas with some overlapping of playground areas required when taking into account physical barriers such as main roads, railway lines and water ways. It is unrealistic to apply this industry benchmark to the Surf Coast Shire's rural or semi-rural residential areas. The provision of a playground where possible on a recreation reserve or associated with a community facility is a more realistic target for these communities.

- *The Surf Coast Shire exceeds the provision of 1 playground per 1,300 head of population or 1 playground per 300 head of population aged 0-14 years of age.*

This industry benchmark applies to metropolitan areas where there is a high population density. In the Surf Coast Shire, Census data is provided in precincts (described *Appendix 2*). Apart from Torquay (where Old Torquay/Torquay West/Torquay North can be combined) township figures are lost within a broad precinct. Accurate assessments cannot be made when applying these ratios to broad areas which vary considerably in population density and playground provision. Some coastal areas also double, if not triple in population in peak tourist times, yet these transient or non-permanent populations are not reflected in the industry benchmark.

In addition to considering these industry benchmarks and their application within the Surf Coast Shire, recommendations on the future provision of playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire also reflect the following:

- an examination of the existing playground provision within Census areas (see *Appendix 2* which explains the Census areas in detail and includes a map of the Census areas);
- an analysis of the classification, age groups provided for and the complexity of the playground facilities in each area (provided in *Appendix 4: Details of Existing Playgrounds*); and
- an analysis of current and projected population data provided in *Section 8.2.1 (Demographic Profile Summary)* and *Appendix 1 (Population and Demographic Data)*.

[REFER TO PRINCIPLE 5 \(EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF PLAYGROUNDS\) PROVIDED IN SECTION 8.3](#)

Spatial Analysis Conclusions

Taking all of the above into consideration, several conclusions can be made about the existing and future distribution of playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire:

- In built up urban residential areas in the Surf Coast Shire, playgrounds should be provided within a 500 metre radius or within a 10 minute walk of every resident;
- When 500 metre radius circles are drawn on a map of a built up urban residential area, the gaps between circles should be minimal;
- There will be, however communities which are better catered for than others in playground provision, as there is not an even distribution of suitable and accessible parks across the Shire in which to locate playgrounds;
- In built up urban residential areas some overlapping of playground areas will be required when taking into account physical barriers such as main roads, railway lines and water ways;
- In townships that experience significant tourist numbers, district or where possible, regional playgrounds should be provided close to the key destination points;
- In rural or semi-rural residential areas, playgrounds should be provided where possible on a recreation reserve or associated with a community facility;
- The development of new playgrounds should be considered when completing outline development plans (ODP's), sub-division plans or in conjunction with master plan projects for parks and reserves;
- The recommended playground hierarchy and distribution criteria maximises the chance that every resident and their children or grandchildren have easy or reasonable access to playgrounds and also enables Council to offer a variety of playground designs styles and to ensure diversity of play experiences; and
- Where there are a number of playgrounds within an urban township, those in close proximity need to offer diversity within the playground or park area with options considered for sensory gardens, active play spaces, teenage play spaces, unique public art features or using play equipment ranges that are unique to that community.



The Aireys Inlet Reserve Playground above and the Bark Hut Playground below are located in close proximity yet offer contrasting environments and play equipment.



Future Playground Provision in Surf Coast Shire

Appendix 3 shows the existing playground provision and recommendations for future playground provision.

Old Torquay – Torquay West area

In the Old Torquay and Torquay West area, the provision of playgrounds within a 500 metre radius of every resident in new and existing estates should be achievable. There are currently 7 playgrounds located in the Old Torquay – Torquay West area. This area has been predicted to show considerable growth in population of children aged 0-14 years, with numbers of children expected to rise from 653 to 1387 between the years 2006 and 2021. The total population in this area will increase proportionately from 3665 to 7145.

Based on 2006 Census data for the Old Torquay – Torquay West area, the current ratio of 1 playground for every 93 children under 14 years of age and 1 playground for every 523 per head of population is well above the industry benchmark. However, there is only minimal overlap of playground areas (using the 500 metre radius principle from the playground location) when studying the Spatial Distribution Maps in Appendix 3. The population density is unlikely to be as high as the areas used for the industry benchmark data. Larger block sizes particularly in the Torquay West area would contribute to the smaller playground to population ratios. Use of playgrounds by tourists and visitors is significant, particularly on weekends and during school holidays.

Significant gaps in existing playground provision can be seen clearly on the Old Torquay and Torquay West maps in Appendix 3. As a result, **two local playgrounds have been recommended** for this area within the next 10 years in the following locations:

- Deep Creek Reserve (F7) , west of the Surf Coast Highway (location to be confirmed following a master plan of this section of the reserve); and
- Surf View Estate (F8) below the Torquay Primary School within a new sub-division (with developer to provide playground facility).

Torquay North area

In the Torquay North area, the provision of playgrounds within a 500 metre radius of every resident in new and existing estates should be achievable. There are currently 6 playgrounds located in the Torquay North area. This area has been predicted to show the greatest growth in population compared to all other areas due to the significant housing developments in the area. The population of children aged 0-14 years is expected to rise from 977 to 2156 between the years 2006 and 2021. The total population in this area will increase proportionately from 4274 to 10150.

RECOMMENDATION 6

FUTURE PLAYGROUND PROVISION

As a result of a spatial analysis of the existing playground provision on the Surf Coast Shire, a further 19 local playgrounds, 1 district playground and 1 regional playground have been recommended to be developed over the next 10 years to 2021. The breakdown of additional playgrounds per Census area is:

- *Old Torquay – Torquay West (2 x Local);*
- *Torquay North (5 x Local, 1 x District);*
- *Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach (2 x Local);*
- *Anglesea (1 x Local, 1 x Regional);*
- *Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh (2 x Local);*
- *Moriac-Rural East (2 x Local); and*
- *Winchelsea-Rural West (5 x Local).*

Based on 2006 Census data for the Torquay North area, the current ratio of 1 playground for every 162 children under 14 years of age and 1 playground for every 712 per head of population is well above the industry benchmark. However, there is only minimal overlap of playground areas (using the 500 metre radius principle from the playground location) when studying the Spatial Distribution Maps in *Appendix 3*. The population density is unlikely to be as high as the areas used for the industry benchmark data. Larger average residential block sizes would contribute to the smaller playground to population ratios. Use of playgrounds by tourists and visitors is significant, particularly on weekends and during school holidays.

Significant gaps in existing playground provision can be seen clearly on the Torquay North map in *Appendix 3*. As a result, **five local playgrounds and one district playground have been recommended** for this area and within the next 10 years in the following locations:

- South Beach Estate (F2) - local playground location to be confirmed following sub-division plan of this area;
- 'Draper Land' Reserve (F3) - local playground location to be confirmed following sub-division plan (with developer to provide playground facility);
- South Beach Road Reserve (F4) - local playground location to be confirmed following sub-division plan of this area;
- Whites Beach (F5) – recommended in Whites Beach Master Plan (*note - this playground is currently in design stage and due to be constructed by July 2011*);
- End of Nautical Rise (F6) - local playground location to be confirmed following sub-division plan (with developer to provide playground facility); and
- Civic / Community Precinct (F1)– a district playground given its high profile location and proximity close to a major sporting reserve (with location to be confirmed in precinct master plan).

Jan Juc – Bellbrae – Bells Beach area

In the Jan Juc area, the provision of playgrounds within a 500 metre radius of every resident in new and existing estates should be achievable. It would not be achievable outside of the urban residential area of Jan Juc. Outside of the residential areas and in small communities, a playground should be provided at a recreation reserve or associated with a community facility.

There are currently 5 playgrounds located in the Jan Juc – Bellbrae – Bells Beach area. This area has been predicted to show only minor growth in population with the population of children aged 0-14 years expected to rise from 1001 to only 1166 between the years 2006 and 2021. The total population in this area will increase proportionately from 4304 to 5476.

Based on 2006 Census data for the Jan Juc – Bellbrae – Bells Beach area, the current ratio of 1 playground for every 200 children under 14 years of age and 1 playground for every 860 per head of population is well above the industry benchmark. However, there is only minimal overlap of playground areas (using the 500 metre radius principle from the playground location) when studying the Spatial Distribution Maps in *Appendix 3*. The population density is unlikely to be as high as the areas used for the industry benchmark data. Larger average residential block sizes would contribute to the smaller playground to population ratios. The overlap at the Bob Pettitt Reserve is due to a toddler playground being provided at the reserve pavilion to service pavilion users, particularly the Jan Juc Playgroup. Use of playgrounds by tourists and visitors is significant, particularly on weekends and during school holidays.

Significant gaps in existing playground provision can be seen clearly on the Jan Juc – Bellbrae – Bells Beach area map in *Appendix 3*. As a result, **two local playgrounds have been recommended** for this area and within the next 10 years in the following locations:

- Bluewater Estate (F10) – recommended as part of park development; and
- Spring Valley Drive (F9) – recommended as part of reserve concept plan to be on future Council land adjacent to new bike facility.

Anglesea area

In the Anglesea area, the provision of playgrounds within a 500 metre radius of every resident should be achievable in the main population areas. It would not be achievable outside of the urban residential area of Anglesea and in small communities a playground should be provided at a recreation reserve or associated with a community facility.

There are currently 4 playgrounds located in the Anglesea area. This area has been predicted to show a minor decrease in population with the population of children aged 0-14 years expected to decrease from 386 to 338 between the years 2006 and 2021. The total population in this area will show a slight increase from 2408 to 2563.

Based on 2006 Census data for the Anglesea area, the current ratio of 1 playground for every 97 children under 14 years of age and 1 playground for every 602 per head of population is well above the industry benchmark. It is likely that the population density would be vastly different the areas used for the industry benchmark data. The playground at the Anglesea Tennis Club caters only for the club members due to its size. Use of playgrounds by tourists and visitors is significant, particularly on weekends and during school holidays.

Significant gaps in existing playground provision can be seen clearly on the Anglesea area map in *Appendix 3*. Currently there is very poor provision in the Anglesea West area but there are no suitable site options available in this area. **One regional and one local playground have been recommended** for this area and within the next 10 years in the following locations:

- Anglesea Riverbank Reserve (F11) – a regional playground - a play facility close to the 4-Kings area was recommended as part of Anglesea Riverbank Master Plan; and
- Point Roadknight (F12) –Local playground to service Point Roadknight community with the location to be investigated further with GORCC.

Lorne – Aireys Inlet – Deans Marsh area

In the Lorne – Aireys Inlet – Deans Marsh area, the provision of playgrounds within a 500 metre radius of every resident may only be achievable in the main population areas in Lorne and Aireys Inlet. The focus in Lorne, Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven and Moggs Creek should be to improve pedestrian access to playgrounds via pathways and to investigate opportunities for playground developments on Council owned land or on suitable land managed by others. In small rural communities a playground should be provided where possible at a recreation reserve or associated with a community facility.

There are currently 8 playgrounds located in the Lorne – Aireys Inlet – Deans Marsh area. This area has been predicted to show a minor increase in population with the population of children aged 0-14 years expected to increase from 562 to 601 between the years 2006 and 2021. The total population in this area will increase from 2993 to 3566.

Based on 2006 Census data for the Lorne – Aireys Inlet – Deans Marsh area, the current ratio of 1 playground for every 70 children under 14 years of age and 1 playground for every 374 per head of population is well above the industry benchmark. The population density would be vastly smaller than that used for the industry benchmark data. Use of playgrounds by tourists and visitors in coastal areas is significant, particularly on weekends and during school holidays.

Significant gaps in existing playground provision can be seen clearly on the Lorne – Aireys Inlet – Deans Marsh area map in *Appendix 3*. Currently there is very poor provision in the townships of Lorne and Aireys Inlet / Fairhaven hence **two local playgrounds being recommended** for this area and within the next 10 years in the following locations:

- Moggs Creek Reserve (F13); and
- Stony Creek Reserve (F14).

RECOMMENDATION 7

ANGLESEA WEST AREA

Playground provision in Anglesea West is very poor due to a lack of available and suitable land. In the short term, the focus should be on facilities on the foreshore / riverbank area with good pathway access required to existing playgrounds in Anglesea from the Anglesea West area. In the medium to long term, opportunities for land leasing or purchase should be explored as well as suitable land being set aside should further land development take place in this area.

RECOMMENDATION 8

LORNE AND MOGGS CREEK

The focus in Lorne, Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven and Moggs Creek should be to improve pedestrian access to playgrounds via pathways and to investigate opportunities for playground developments on suitable Council owned land or Crown land managed by others.

Moriac – Rural East

In the Moriac – Rural East area, the provision of playgrounds within a 500 metre radius of every resident may only be achievable in the main population areas in Moriac. The focus in small rural communities should be that a playground be provided where possible at a recreation reserve or associated with a community facility.

There are currently 5 playgrounds located in the Moriac – Rural East area. This area has been predicted to show a minor increase in population with the population of children aged 0-14 years expected to increase from 621 to 687 between the years 2006 and 2021. The total population in this area will increase from 2506 to 3081.

Based on 2006 Census data for the Moriac – Rural East area, the current ratio of 1 playground for every 124 children under 14 years of age and 1 playground for every 501 per head of population is well above the industry benchmark. It is likely that the population density would be vastly different the areas used for the industry benchmark data.

Significant gaps in existing playground provision can be seen clearly on the Moriac – Rural East area map in *Appendix 3*. **Two local playgrounds have been recommended** for this rural area and within the next 10 years in the following locations:

- Modewarre Reserve (F20) – a small local playgrounds recommended within the reserve master plan; and
- Thompson's Creek, Moriac (F21) – a small local playground for which Council has received a Developer Contribution for.

Winchelsea – Rural West area

In the Winchelsea – Rural West area, the provision of playgrounds within a 500 metre radius of every resident should be achievable only in the main population area of Winchelsea. It would not be achievable outside of the urban residential area of Winchelsea and in small communities a playground should be provided at a recreation reserve or associated with a community facility.

There are currently only 2 playgrounds located in the Winchelsea – Rural West area. This area has been predicted to show a minor increase in population with the population of children aged 0-14 years expected to increase from 563 to 582 between the years 2006 and 2021. The total population in this area will show a slight increase from 2653 to 2046. Based on 2006 Census data for the Winchelsea – Rural West area, the current ratio of 1 playground for every 281 children under 14 years of age and 1 playground for every 1326 per head of population is almost equal to the industry benchmark. It is likely that the population density would be vastly different the areas used for the industry benchmark data.

Significant gaps in existing playground provision can be seen clearly on the Winchelsea – Rural West area map in *Appendix 3*. **Five local playgrounds have been recommended** for this area and within the next 10 years in the following locations:

- Wurdale Hall (F15);
- Olney St Reserve, Winchelsea (F16);
- Eastern Reserve, Winchelsea (F17) – recommended within Eastern Reserve Master Plan;
- Hesse St, Winchelsea (F18); and
- Beal / Trebeck Crt Reserve, Winchelsea (F19).

9.3 Play Value Assessment of Existing Playgrounds

There is considerable variation amongst existing playgrounds in the Shire and an assessment of the play value of the playground and play space is aimed at highlighting what is needed to upgrade existing playgrounds to meet minimum requirements and ultimately to raise the standard of these spaces which are so highly valued by the community. An assessment of play value is also applicable when planning new playgrounds so that the play outcome is maximised and expensive retrofitting is avoided.

Section 8.3.3 details the Play Value Assessment System, provides a Play Value Assessment Matrix and applies a point system and a way of then prioritising works if required for playground refurbishment or improvement.

Section 9.1 details how existing playgrounds compare to the recommended standards in the Playground Hierarchy Matrix and highlights the different components and opportunities that are required to bring that playground up to the relevant regional, district or local level. When implemented, many of these improvements would result in a higher Play Value Assessment rating. This crossover is expected between what has been identified in the assessment of existing playgrounds against the Playground Hierarchy Matrix to what is identified in this Play Value Assessment System.

The results of this Play Value Assessment will help to identify any additional areas of improvement or upgrade that could be implemented in order to raise the standard of existing playgrounds and also to assist in prioritising playground projects according to a play value rating rather than purely on the age of the asset. The Play Value Assessment System will also be beneficial in the planning and design process for new playgrounds provided by the Surf Coast Shire Council or via developers.

The following Play Value Assessment table is provided in *Section 8.3.3*.

Rating score	Priority	Recommended Time Frame
30 or less	High	1 - 2 years
31 to 44	Medium	3 - 4 years
45 or above	Low	5 - 6 years

Play Value Assessment of Regional Playgrounds

Existing regional playgrounds are not assessed using the Play Value Assessment System as the only 2 existing regional playgrounds are managed by the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee. When planning is undertaken for the new regional playground proposed for the Anglesea Riverbank, the design of the playground will be assessed according to the Play Value Assessment System, will be designed in accordance to the Regional Playground classification standards and also according to the recommended Design Guidelines provided in *Section 9.4* of this document.

Play Value Assessment of District Playgrounds

Table 13 on the following page details the application of the Play Value Assessment Tool to the existing seven district playgrounds managed by the Surf Coast Shire.

The new *Bob Pettitt Reserve Playground* achieved a high play value rating of 53. The *Moriac All Access Playground* in Newling Reserve achieved a high play value rating of 49. The *Winchelsea Riverbank Playground* also achieved a high play value rating of 45. These two playgrounds are therefore considered low priorities compared to the other district playgrounds for the implementation of recommended improvements to play value.

Priority ratings according to play value may be affected in situations where a particular playground requires significant works to meet the recommended standards for its relevant classification in the playground hierarchy. Following the implementation of the Playground Upgrade Works Program (detailed in Section 10), it is expected that the play value ratings for each playground would improve greatly.

Four existing district playgrounds are considered to be medium priorities compared to the other district playgrounds for the implementation of recommended improvements to play value. The *Coogoorah Park Playground* in Anglesea achieved a play value rating of 43, the *Bellbrae Reserve* and *Deans Marsh Playgrounds* achieved play value ratings of 42 and the *Aireys Inlet Reserve Playground* achieved a play value rating of 39.

Table 13: District Playground Play Value Assessment

Rating: Good (significantly meets the play value criteria) 3 points; Fair (partially meets the play value criteria) 2 points, Poor (fails to meet the play value criteria) 1 point

Key Assessment Area	Sub Area	District Playground	MORIAC ALL ACCESS	WINCHELSEA RIVERBANK	COOGOORAH PARK ANGLESEA	AIREYS INLET RESERVE	BELLBRAE RESERVE	DEANS MARSH	BOB PETTIT RESERVE
Diversity of Play	Physical / active play on play equipment or in surrounding built or free play areas.	√	3	3	3	3	2	2	3
	Cognitive play to challenge the intellect (i.e. games, exploration and observation).	√	2	2	2	1	2	2	2
	Creative play with opportunities for free play or manipulation of objects/materials.	√	2	2	2	1	2	2	2
	Social play with places and equipment for interaction with others.	√	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Range of Ages	Multiple age groups and abilities need to be provided for within a play space.	Play equipment for a range of ages (0-12) and abilities	3	3	3	2	2	2	3
	There are age / development level appropriate activities for the age groups that the play space has been provided for.	√	3	3	3	2	2	2	3
	The age groups provided for are appropriate for the demographics of the area.	√	3	3	3	2	2	2	3
	Play spaces nearby need to offer different opportunities and experiences.	√	2	2	1	3	2	2	2
Inclusiveness and Accessibility	Connectivity via pathways to the play space.	√	3	2	3	2	2	2	3
	Accessible play elements.	Inclusive elements	2	1	1	1	1	2	3
	Best parts of the play space to be accessible to all abilities.	Best parts of the playground accessible	2	1	1	1	1	1	3
	Parents and carers able to interact with children within the play space.	√	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
	Amenities provided are accessible to all.	√	2	1	1	2	2	2	3
Physical Condition	Play equipment or structures are safe (meet Australian Playground Standards).	√	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	Play equipment or structures are structurally sound.	√	3	3	2	2	3	2	3
	Play equipment or structures are visually appealing.	√	3	3	2	2	3	3	3
Originality	Provision of unique features including natural materials and artistic elements.	√	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
Surrounding Environment	Surrounding natural features (e.g. trees or creeks) and built structures (e.g. pathways, bridges, skate area, BMX track, ball game area, half court, etc.).	Range of associated activities close to playground	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	Provision of amenities (e.g. toilets, picnic areas, shade and seating).	√	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
TOTAL SCORE (out of possible 57)			49	45	43	39	42	42	53
Priority			LOW	LOW	MED	MED	MED	MED	LOW

Play Value Assessment of Local Playgrounds

Table 14 on the following page details the application of the Play Value Assessment Tool to the existing 23 local playgrounds managed by the Surf Coast Shire.

Sixteen existing local playgrounds are considered to be medium priorities compared to the other local playgrounds for the implementation of recommended improvements to play value. The playgrounds include:

- *Hill Top Playground* in the Quay Reserve with a play value rating of 44;
- *Bark Hut Reserve Playground* in Aireys Inlet with a play value rating of 42;
- The new *Aireys Inlet Community Centre Playground* with a play value rating of 41;
- The new *Clerke Court Playground* in Moriac with a play value rating of 40;
- The redeveloped *Anglesea Lions Park Playground* with a play value rating of 39 (Stage 2 works to come in 2011/12);
- *Jan Juc Creek Reserve Playground* with a play value rating of 37;
- *Great Ocean Views Reserve Playground* in Torquay with a play value rating of 37;
- *Sarabande Crescent Playground* in Torquay with a play value rating of 36;
- *Moriac Community Centre Playground* with a play value rating of 36;
- *Deep Creek Reserve Playground* with a play value rating of 35;
- *Ocean Acres Playground* with a play value rating of 35;
- *Frog Hollow Playground* with a play value rating of 34;
- *Bob Pettitt Pavilion Playground* with a play value rating of 34;
- *Connewarre Reserve Playground* with a play value rating of 34;
- *St Anne's Reserve Playground* with a play value rating of 32;
- *Kalkarra Park Playground* with a play value rating of 32; and
- *The Quay Reserve Playground* with a play value rating of 31.

Six existing local playgrounds are considered to be high priorities compared to the other local playgrounds for the implementation of recommended improvements to play value. The playgrounds include:

- *Dwyer Street Playground* in Winchelsea with a play value rating of 28;
- *Torquay Boulevard Reserve Playground* with a play value rating of 28;
- *Bambra Hall & Reserve Playground* with a play value rating of 27;
- *Freshwater Creek Reserve Playground* with a play value rating of 26;
- *Mount Moriac Reserve Playground* with a play value rating of 25; and
- *Anglesea Tennis Club Playground* with a play value rating of 23.

Table 14: Local Playground Play Value Assessment (have only assessed Surf Coast Shire managed playgrounds)

Rating: Good (significantly meets the play value criteria) 3 points; Fair (partially meets the play value criteria) 2 points, Poor (fails to meet the play value criteria) 1 point
 (Note : Playgrounds being completed in financial year 09/10 are assessed as a new product based on expectations about the final outcomes of these current projects)

Key Assessment Area	Sub Area	Local Playground d	DEEP CREEK RESERVE	ST ANNE'S RESERVE	QUAY RESERVE	SARABANDE CRES	GREAT OCEAN VIEWS	OCEAN ACRES	FROG HOLLOW	JAN JUC CREEK RESERVE	TORQUAY BLVD RESERVE	BOB PETTIT PAVILION	ANGLESEA TENNIS CLUB	ANGLESEA LIONS PARK	BARK HUT RESERVE	AIREYS INLET COMMUNITY	BAMBRA HALL /RESERVE	WINCHELSEA DWYER ST	MT MORIAC RESERVE	CLERKE CRT MORIAC	MORIAC COMM CENTRE	FRESHWATER CREEK RESERVE	KALKARRA RESERVE	CONNWARRE RESERVE	HILL TOP RESERVE
			2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	3
Diversity of Play	Physical / active play on play equipment or in surrounding built or free play areas.	Provide minimum of 2 play types but will aim to include the 4 types of play in all new local playground designs	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	3	2
	Cognitive play to challenge the intellect (i.e. games, exploration and observation).		1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2
	Creative play with opportunities for free play or manipulation of objects/materials.		2	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2
	Social play with places and equipment for interaction with others.		2	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2
Range of Ages	Multiple age groups and abilities need to be provided for within a play space.	Basic provision -at least 2 age gps	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	3
	There are age / development level appropriate activities for the age groups that the play space has been provided for.	√	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	2
	The age groups provided for are appropriate for the demographics of the area.	√	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2
	Play spaces nearby need to offer different opportunities and experiences.	√	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	1	3	3	1	2	2	3
Inclusiveness and Accessibility	Connectivity via pathways to the play space.	√	2	3	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	3	3	1	1	1	3
	Accessible play elements.	Where possible	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2
	Best parts of the play space to be accessible to all abilities.	Where possible	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3
	Parents and carers able to interact with children within the play space.	Where possible	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Amenities provided are accessible to all.	√	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2
Physical Condition	Play equipment or structures are safe (meet Australian Playground Standards).	√	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	Play equipment/structures structurally sound.	√	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3
	Play equipment/structures visually appealing.	√	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	3	1	3	3	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2
Originality	Provision of unique features including natural materials and artistic elements.	Where possible	1	1	2	3	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2
Surrounding Environment	Surrounding natural features (e.g. trees or creeks) and built structures (e.g. pathways, bridges, skate area, BMX track, ball game area, half court, etc.).	Few associated activities close to playground	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	3	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Provision of amenities (e.g. toilets, picnic areas, shade and seating).	√	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
TOTAL SCORE (out of possible 57)			35	32	31	36	37	35	34	37	28	34	23	39	42	41	27	28	25	40	36	26	32	34	44
Priority (H= high, M = medium, L=low)			M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	H	M	H	M	M	M	H	H	H	M	M	H	M	M	M

9.4 Playground Design Issues and Guidelines

9.4.1 Key Design Issues and Directions

There are essential design elements that are important to include in any playground development, whatever the classification. If a playground has been thoughtfully and effectively designed, the potential for learning and development is maximised, the opportunities for participation by children of all ages and abilities is maximised and the risk of injury is minimised. When we are designing a play space, basic to decision making is providing choice for children. The wider the choice the more likely that a child will find something in the play space that they can enjoy.

The key design components and issues important for all playgrounds are discussed on the pages following and several key design principles emerge that are important for the future provision of playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire. The key areas to be discussed are:

- **Play Value** (*Section 9.4.1.1*)
- **Accessibility and Inclusion** (*Section 9.4.1.2*)
- **Safety** (*Section 9.4.1.3*)
- **Aesthetic Quality** (*Section 9.4.1.4*)
- **Spatial Quality** (*Section 9.4.1.5*)

9.4.1.1 Play Value

Play value refers to both the quality of the play opportunities available at the site as well as the play experiences available (i.e. opportunities for physical, cognitive, creative and social play in an attractive and inviting setting). An assessment of the play value of a play space includes the areas of play diversity or types of play, the range of ages provided for; the accessibility of the space; the physical condition and appeal of the play space; the unique or original qualities of the play space and what value the surrounding environment provides for play.

Refer to *Section 8.3.3* of the Playground Strategy under the heading of *Play Value Assessment* for a detailed discussion of *play value* and the important components of play value. These components will again be listed in the Design Guidelines Matrix to follow this discussion.

Playground Principle 7: Designing for Play Value

The Surf Coast Shire will strive to provide great spaces for play that are welcoming and stimulating places to spend time in and provide quality play experiences and opportunities for people of all abilities.

9.4.1.2 Accessibility and Inclusion

The area of accessibility and inclusion has been covered briefly under *Assessing Play Value* in Section 8.3.3 of this Playground Strategy as it forms one of the key criteria in the new Play Value Assessment System that has been developed. The key elements of designing for accessibility and inclusion require further detail in this section.

An accessible playground environment supports inclusion and participation within a welcoming space and where there are opportunities for people to meet and play together. Many children and adults who have a disability are not able to use public play spaces for a variety of reasons. The challenge for the Surf Coast Shire is to understand and acknowledge how and why play spaces can limit access to some children and carers and to identify achievable improvements that can be made to increase participation by all children and carers in play. Some 'access' solutions may be technically and physically accessible but do little to encourage play, and sometimes can be inconvenient or even segregating. The examples to the right illustrate this point.

It is essential that access and inclusion be included from the outset, at the concept stage, so that accessibility does not become an 'after-thought' and an expensive 'add-on'.

There is no one way to provide access for every person and there is no set of rules to make a play space accessible. Some people have very specific requirements and these cannot always be met, especially in smaller, local play spaces.

Where a playground is to be developed as 'All Access', disability groups and services would be specifically engaged in the playground process so as to welcome and encourage use by Shire residents and visitors with a disability.

It is not possible to make all playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire fully accessible to all abilities, it is important to consider a range of accessible design elements that encourage and welcome participation by all abilities. Information from the Maroondah City Council¹² has assisted in developing the following key design criteria for an accessible play space. The following criteria are discussed in detail in the table on the following page:

- **Play Equipment For All Abilities**
- **Sensory Play**
- **Continuous Accessible Paths of Travel**
- **Accessible Amenities**

¹² Maroondah City Council 'Access 4 All 2 Play' project 2006



Accessible play features in the Surf Coast Shire



The community at work in creating Sensory Garden features in the Bob Pettitt Reserve

Accessible and Inclusive Playground Criteria

Criteria	Description
Play Equipment For All Abilities	<p>Design elements that can assist in the inclusion of children with a range of <i>physical</i> abilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having seamless access within the playground to a choice of accessible activities; • providing graduated challenge (i.e. monkey bars/balance beams at different heights); • tunnels of varying diameter and length can allow for different sensations of crawling, sitting, hiding, talking, walking, running or even allowing wheelchair access through; • activities that are accessible front-on from a wheelchair; • rockers with backrests, foot rests, wide seats, side by side seats or deeper seats that enable more people including adults to use them; and • swings including hammock swings and wheelchair or 'Liberty' swings. <p>Design elements to assist the inclusion of children with various <i>sensory</i> impairments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having a variety of textural surfaces; • having strong visual cues for level changes; and • providing navigable connections between different activity areas. <p>Design elements to assist inclusion of children with a range of <i>intellectual</i> or <i>cognitive</i> abilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing larger seats on some activities typically provided for younger children (e.g. swings with wide or larger strap seats with back support for an older person); • providing opportunities for all children to play alongside other children and join in socially with others; and • allowing carers with a disability to have an opportunity to play with their own children.
Sensory Play	<p>Play spaces can provide sensory appeal or opportunities to enhance children's experience of texture, sound, colour, pattern, light, smell, space and motion. Examples of design elements that provide sensory opportunities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planting can provide textures, smells, shapes, sounds, light and shade through trees and interest through seasonal changes to plants; • 'squeeze' experiences can be provided by padded poles, close planting, positioning of boulders to squeeze through or items to squeeze under; • small interactive elements that move and respond to touch; • etchings or patterns that can be touched and followed with fingers, hands or feet; • interactive sound and musical activities; • natural elements such as sand, mud, water, pebbles, stones and bark; • tunnels can create differences in light, colour, shade, sound and a planted tunnel provides a special kind of enclosure; and • a story told through art works can create a distinctive and memorable character.
Continuous Accessible Paths of Travel	<p>Connectivity via hard or compacted pathways to the play space, to specific activities within the play space and also to accessible amenities is an essential design element. Parents and carers should be able to easily interact with children within the play space.</p>
Accessible Amenities	<p>It is essential to provide amenities for children and carers that are accessible (i.e. shelters, toilets, picnic tables, bench seats, car parking, water fountains and pathways).</p>

Playground Principle 8: Designing for Accessibility and Inclusiveness

The Surf Coast Shire values inclusiveness and will aim to ensure that all playgrounds and play spaces can be used and enjoyed by people of all abilities. Council will endeavour to provide access for all abilities and to incorporate inclusive play elements into all playgrounds.



The examples provided here are only a few of countless accessible design possibilities in playgrounds. The Good Play Space Guide *I Can Play Too*¹³ is an excellent resource for developing accessible playgrounds and provides extensive detail on each of the accessible design criteria in the table above.

¹³ Sport and Recreation Victoria, *The Good Play Space Guide 'I Can Play Too'*, 2007

9.4.1.3 Safety

The area of safety has been covered briefly under *Assessing Play Value* in *Section 9.3* of this Playground Strategy as it forms one of the key criteria in the new Play Value Assessment System that has been developed. The key elements of safe design require further detail in this section.

It is important to note that in providing a safe environment in which to play, play needs to be as safe as necessary, not as safe as possible. In other words, a playground should involve challenges and opportunities for risk taking, yet be free of unacceptable risks or hazards that create undue danger which children are unable to deal with.

Lynnel Migas¹⁴ who is the Director of *PlayRight Australia* defines the terms risk and hazard. A *risk* “involves choice and is an integral part of a child’s play environment, motor skill development and learning experience. Risk allows the user to identify the challenge, evaluate the level of the challenge and then make a determination of how that challenge is to be dealt with”. A *hazard* “is a danger that may not be foreseen and /or evaluated by the user and therefore the potential for injury is hidden”.

Through good planning and design, playgrounds area hazards (e.g. use of timber that splinters, entrapment points, trip hazards, poorly placed swings and slides) can be eliminated or avoided, while not totally eliminating the element of risk and positive challenges which make a positive contribution to children’s learning of new skills.

A good example of where a positive challenge can be provided is involving the area of *height*. Children love to get up high to see over the play space, see where other children are hiding, to access an elevated play feature or just to get a sense of being ‘big’. Within a play space, popular equipment (such as monkey bars/rings and track glides) can be duplicated at different heights so that smaller, inexperienced or younger children can reach features provided traditionally for older children, without having to be lifted and held by an adult and without the risk of having to jump and then miss or fall.

The key areas of safe design to be discussed in this Playground Strategy are:

- **Compliance with Australian Playground Standards;**
- **Types of Playground Under Surfacing;**
- **Shade; and**
- **Fencing**

Playground Principle 9: Designing Safe Play Spaces

The Surf Coast Shire will provide safe play environments that involve positive challenges and opportunities for risk taking, yet be free of unacceptable risks or hazards.

¹⁴ Lynnel Migas (Director PlayRight Australia Pty Ltd) *Is playground safety being taken seriously?* (A paper produced in 2003)

Compliance with Australian Playground Standards

National and international standards for the design, siting and construction of playgrounds is a continually evolving area and there is also debate within the Australian playground industry regarding the appropriate interpretation and application of standards. Whilst Australian Playground Standards are not mandatory (i.e. not legislated) they are viewed as the minimum benchmark required for playground equipment, design, compliance, installation, maintenance and inspection.

Play spaces in Australia are supported by Australian Standards for Playgrounds. The current playground standards, including new and revised standards released in October 2004, that are relevant to the design of playgrounds include:

- *AS 4685 - Parts 1-6 (2004) Playgrounds and Playground Equipment* – covers the general safety requirements and test methods for general and specific play equipment);
- *AS 4685 - Parts 8 Playgrounds and Playground Equipment* – additional safety requirements for climbing equipment;
- *AS/NZS 4486.1 (1997) Playgrounds and Playground Equipment* – covers development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation and will be replaced by *AS 4685 - Part 7 Playgrounds and Playground Equipment – Guidance on installation, inspection, maintenance and operation* when this standard is published;
- *AS/NZS 4422 (1996 and amendment No.1 5/5/1999) Playground Surfacing* – covers specifications, requirements and test methods; and
- *AS/NZS 4360 (2004) Risk Management*.

Types of Playground Under Surfacing

Although covered under the above section, this design element is important when planning and designing playgrounds in different settings and for all abilities.

• **Hardwood Chips**

The preferred playground mulch or soft fall used in Surf Coast Shire playgrounds is hardwood chips which have the following advantages: it meets Australian Standards for impact absorption; it is a natural product; it is clean; it holds moisture well without becoming too soggy; it is cost effective and readily available; and it is non-abrasive.

The disadvantages of hardwood chips are: it is a natural product, some loads can differ from others; there can be sharp pieces in some loads and this can be an issue for children without footwear and for infants who like to taste test everything; it requires a border to contain it and requires frequent topping up and raking; and this surface makes it difficult for some children and adults with disabilities to move through the play space.

Playground Principle 9.1: Compliance with Australian Standards

The Surf Coast Shire will ensure that playgrounds are designed, installed and maintained to meet relevant Australian Playground Standards.

- **Sand**

The advantages of sand as an under surfacing material are that it is readily available and cost effective; it has a natural, soft and attractive appearance well suited to a coastal playground themes; and it is useful for sand play, construction and manipulation activities.

The disadvantages of using sand are animals fouling the sand (i.e. particularly cats and dogs) can be a problem; sand can be very abrasive on play equipment, wooden decks and ramps; sand requires a border to contain it and requires frequent topping up and raking; and this surface makes it difficult for some children and adults with disabilities to get in and move through the play space.

- **Synthetic Rubber Surfaces**

The advantages of synthetic rubber surfaces as an under surfacing material are that these surfaces provide predictable landing and take-off, under and around equipment and they wear very well in high use areas (under swings and at slide ends); it allows the incorporation of colour, patterns and texture which can add play value and also enhance orientation; it can be used on slopes; and synthetic surfaces are sometimes best used in combination with mulch.

The disadvantages of using large areas of synthetic rubber surfaces are that there is a high initial cost; it can be complex to repair; it can be warm to touch on hot days; and it can 'plasticise' play areas and seal off the less predictable world of dirt, weeds and nature.

When used in conjunction with hardwood chip under surfacing, the installation of synthetic rubber pads under swings and at slide ends can be very effective in ensuring that the impact absorption quality of the surface in these high wear areas is sustained. The Playground Renewal Program addresses the need to upgrade the surfacing of existing playgrounds through the provision of rubber take-off and landing pads at the end of slides and under swings. When new playgrounds are supplied, the supply of rubber pads is a playground brief requirement.

Playground Principle 9.2: Playground Under Surfacing

Due to cost effectiveness and durability, the preferred material for under surfacing in Surf Coast Shire playgrounds is hardwood chips. The Surf Coast Shire will endeavour to combine this surface whenever possible with other surface materials to improve sustainability of surfaces and to increase the diversity and accessibility of play experiences. Rubber pads will be provided in high wear areas.

Comparing Under Surfacing Materials

The Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria (PRAV)¹⁵ do not rate one surface over another and have the opinion that "rubber or synthetic surfaces are not more effective than loose materials in preventing injury". PRAV believes that there is a need for a wide variety of playing surfaces to be available to children and that every setting should be assessed according to the needs of the children, the diversity of play experiences available to the children, the availability of materials and the cost involved (including maintenance).

¹⁵ Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria website www.prav.asn.au

Shade

The provision of shade in playgrounds is vital to allow a safe play environment during the hot summer months. Playgrounds with little or no shade can result in children or supervising adults being over exposed to harmful solar radiation while using the playgrounds.

Designing for adequate shade in playgrounds should start with the planting of deciduous shade trees to the north, west and east of the playground area. This is the most cost effective and sustainable way of providing or improving the provision of shade in playgrounds and also improves the playground setting. Semi-mature trees should be planted where possible as they are more resistant to physical damage than seedling plants. Although shade trees are the most desirable form of shade in playground environments, if existing trees are limited or due to the time taken for planted trees to make an impact, built shade in the form of pergolas or shelters may also be appropriate in some reserves. If there is a choice of sites for a new or redeveloped playground, siting the playground near to existing shade trees will provide the best outcome, provided that the trees are healthy and are not prone to dropping limbs.

The installation of shade sail structures over some or all of the playground can be very expensive. There are also frequent problems with vandalism and if they are permanent structures they can limit valuable winter sun.

Other design elements to consider are providing playground structure that shade parts of the playground such as elevated decks with roof lines of differing sized and angles to shade the sun at the hottest time of the day. Orienting play equipment with large surfaces (such as slides) southward can minimise the possibility of these items overheating and causing discomfort for users.

Fencing

The installation of fencing can impede the ease of access to playgrounds both physically and visually and can limit where play activities can take place. Fences can also discourage supervision and interaction with children. It is important that parents and carers play an active supervision role when children are using a playground and not rely on fencing so they can abdicate their duty of care. Fencing is only seen as a suitable inclusion when a playground is located near a major road or car park and where possible, the use of landscape features could be used instead of a fence to restrict or deter movement in the direction of a perceived hazard. The initial siting of a playground should consider proximity to water, busy roads or steep drops but if a site is close to these types of hazards, a fence makes many adults more comfortable about a child's safety.

There is a place for a few fenced play spaces within a municipality but wherever possible, fences should be used for visual definition (i.e. through the use of single rail fences) or even natural barriers such as hedges or even rocks should be considered to provide a sense of containment rather than actual containment. Partial fencing using post and rail timber, sound sculpture panels and artwork within a feature fence can be used selectively to limit or deter movement in a particular direction from the play area.

Playground Principle 9.3: Shade

Where possible, the design, siting and upgrade of playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire will be undertaken with a view to providing a safe play environment allowing some protection from the sun. This may be achieved through locating facilities near existing shade providing features such as trees or shelters or through the planting of new shade trees.



An example of a sound sculpture within a fence at Deans Marsh to deter children from running into a car park

Playground Principle 9.4: Fencing

Full fencing around playgrounds will only be considered where there is extreme danger to users of the play space and in these occasions, playground relocation to a safer environment should be considered before full fencing of the play space. Partial fencing of a playground can be used to limit or deter movement of children towards an identified hazard or danger and should be integrated attractively into the playground setting.

9.4.1.4 Aesthetic Quality

An important component of playground design that is often overlooked or is first to be cut from a limited project budget is aesthetic value or quality. Aesthetic qualities make a play environment unique, special, interesting and appealing.

The key areas in the designing playgrounds with good aesthetic qualities include:

- **Community Art;**
- **Incorporating Natural Elements;**
- **Landscaped Playground Borders; and**
- **Use of Timber.**

Community Art

The Surf Coast Shire Arts Strategy invites community spaces to be enriched with art works that celebrate and reflect local cultures and values and that add a feeling of quality to people's daily experiences. Experience suggests the greatest impact from community art is achieved when it is integrated into popular community places and spaces that people enjoy for a variety of reasons. Playgrounds are an ideal vehicle for the integration of community artwork into the play experience.

Community art in playgrounds need not be something simply to look at or be purely decorative. It has the potential to be, and should be, interactive and integral to the physical and cognitive play experiences offered by a playground. Community art adds a unique identity and character that may enhance the sense of place and foster greater community enjoyment and appreciation of the play space. This is particularly so when the local community are able to participate in developing themes and implementing the works. Inclusion of artwork in playground developments will aid in the improvement of play value as well as the design of the whole park, and as such should be seen as an important consideration at the planning and design stages of playground developments.

Community art can take the form of sculptures (some of which can be played on), murals, art panels, mosaics or any unique structures that add value and interest to a play environment. Important cultural features can include commemorative plantings, memorials, items of heritage value, artwork that tells a story or creates a theme relevant to a specific site or area and also sculptures using local materials or themes.



Artwork in community spaces near playgrounds can provide a memorable play experience.



Artwork within playgrounds provides engaging opportunities with great results.



Incorporating Natural Elements

There are numerous qualities available in the natural environment that can stimulate play and an understanding of these qualities is important when designing play spaces.

A recent publication by Mia Hughes¹⁶ about natural play spaces in early childhood settings provides key design recommendations for incorporating natural elements. Natural elements in playgrounds can reflect the local landscape and may also reconstruct an indigenous environment that may have been lost through land use and development. Natural elements provide the 'loose parts of play' through trees, shrubs, sand, grasses, bark, gum nuts, cones, soil, rocks, water and flowers and can invite open-ended interaction, exploration and manipulation and provide opportunities for risk taking, spontaneity and discovery. The playground is alive and unique, always evolving and never finished.

Natural areas offer amenity, beauty, changeability and unpredictability as they can change with the seasons, the weather and naturally as they grow and develop within the play environment. There is potential for a new discovery with each visit to the play space. Specific planting can encourage birds, native mammals and insects. Paths can meander through vegetation and raised garden beds and create interest in what might be discovered around the corner. Water can be incorporated into a play area via a simple mechanism of a run-off into a sand pit from a drink fountain, with rocks, bark, twigs, leaves and other natural elements being on hand to stop, redirect or channel water flow in a certain way.

Landscaped Playground Borders

Factors that influence the landscape character of play spaces in the Surf Coast Shire include the presence of trees and natural vegetation, the topography of the adjoining land, the materials and surfaces used in the landscaping and the incorporation of features of interest, useability and appeal. Generally the landscape character of playgrounds within the Surf Coast Shire is quite basic and lacks interest and sensory appeal as well as limiting access.

When impact absorbing playground under surfacing became a required Australian Standard in the 1990's, raised treated pine 'box' edging was introduced to keep the under surfacing within a contained area. Despite recognising the value of incorporating landscape into the play space, many playground budgets did not allow for this component. The Surf Coast Shire has begun to progressively upgrade the landscaping around playgrounds with these spaces now seen to be more fluid rather than isolated features within a reserve. Effective landscaped playground border features include: mounded garden beds; use of local rock (round flat surfaces), use of sustainable timbers; planting of indigenous vegetation and also building materials to enhance the natural value of the site and unify the site with the surroundings.

¹⁶ Mia Hughes for Gosford City Council and Wyong Shire Council, 'Climbing the Little Green Steps : Section 7 – natural play spaces and sustainable playground design' (September 2007)



Examples of landscaped playground borders in the Surf Coast Shire



Use of Timber

The predominant material used in playground construction in the Surf Coast Shire is timber. When planning for playgrounds, the community have guided the Surf Coast Shire in the type of materials that best reflect the natural and aesthetic value of the coastal and rural environment. Native cypress pine is the most commonly available untreated durable timber available in Australia. It is also the most widely used timber for playground construction and is the timber type used in the majority of playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire. This timber is sourced from the inland forests of NSW and southern Queensland. While availability is reasonably good, there are concerns regarding the long term sustainability of this building material. There are, however, some durable hardwoods entering the market which are plantation grown (such as Sugar Gum). Supply of these is quite limited at present and there is also limited availability of the sizes required for playground construction. This is likely to change as the trees mature and there may be more sustainable timber options.

9.4.1.5 Spatial Quality

Ensuring that a play space has good spatial quality is largely determined during initial planning stages when decisions are made as to where a new playground is sited within an existing park or when developers are locating and designing space for a park and playground development. The key areas in planning and designing playgrounds with good spatial qualities include:

- **Complimentary Amenities:** Regional, District and some Local playgrounds provide amenities such as shade, toilets, picnic tables, bench seats, car parking, water fountains, pathways, bins, signs, shelters and BBQ's. These facilities should be provided where relevant and customised to improve the identity and quality of playgrounds.
- **Adjacent Facilities or Activities:** Having available space to provide for additional activities near to the playground and for older siblings is important. Activities such as ball games and kite flying can be facilitated on a flat, grassed area. A BMX track, skate park, oval, tennis courts, half court basketball area or a hit up wall, when provided, can provide good play value adjacent to the playground and encourage longer visits by family members of all ages.
- **Strategic Suitability of Open Space:** From an open space and playground planning perspective, the following factors are important :
 - Adequate Size* - the minimum space allocation for a district playground is 6,000m² and 4,000m² for a local playground.
 - Accessible* - it is important that playgrounds are sited with road frontage on at least one road, central to the surrounding residential area, close to community facilities such as schools and shops and connected to open space spines and multi-purpose trails and paths.
 - Useable* - land needs to be above the 1 in 20 year flood level and have good drainage. The slope of the land should not exceed 1:20. The land should be free of defects such as hazardous landfill, easements which restrict use, soil erosion and existing vegetation which is dangerous or diseased. There should be services (water, sewerage and electricity) available to the site.

Playground Principle 10: Designing for Aesthetic Quality

The Surf Coast Shire will strive to provide playgrounds with good aesthetic qualities by integrating community art, natural elements and landscape features to create interesting and appealing playgrounds.



Playground Principle 11: Designing for Spatial Quality

Suitable spaces for playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire should be provided where possible with supporting amenities and be integrated with adjacent activities of interest to all ages and abilities.

9.4.2 Design Guidelines for New Playgrounds

Guideline Area	Sub area	Description	Regional Playground	District Playground	Local Playground
PLAY VALUE	Diversity of Play	Physical / active play on play equipment or in surrounding built or free play areas.	✓	✓	✓
		Cognitive play to challenge the intellect (i.e. games, exploration and observation).	✓	✓	✓
		Creative play with opportunities for free play or manipulation of objects/materials.	✓	✓	Where possible
		Social play with places and equipment for interaction with others.	✓	✓	Where possible
	Range of Ages	Multiple age groups and abilities need to be provided for within a play space.	✓	✓	✓
		Age / development level appropriate activities for the age groups provided for.	✓	✓	✓
		The age groups provided for are appropriate for the demographics of the area.	✓	✓	✓
		Play spaces nearby need to offer different opportunities and experiences.	✓	✓	✓
	Inclusiveness and Accessibility	Connectivity via pathways to the play space.	✓	✓	✓
		Accessible play elements.	Range of elements	Inclusive elements	Where possible
		Best parts of the play space to be accessible to all abilities.	✓	✓	Where possible
		Parents and carers able to interact with children within the play space.	✓	✓	Where possible
	Physical Condition	Amenities provided are accessible to all.	✓	✓	✓
		Play equipment or structures are safe (meet Australian Playground Standards).	✓	✓	✓
		Play equipment or structures are structurally sound.	✓	✓	✓
Originality	Play equipment or structures are visually appealing.	✓	✓	✓	
	Provision of unique features including natural materials and artistic elements.	✓	✓	Where possible	
	Surrounding natural features (e.g. trees or creeks) and built structures (e.g. pathways, bridges, skate area, BMX track, ball game area, half court, etc.).	✓	✓	Where possible	
Surrounding Environment	Provision of amenities (e.g. toilets, picnic areas, shade and seating).	✓	✓	✓	
	Play Equipment For All Abilities	Design elements that can assist in the inclusion of children with a range of <i>physical</i> abilities	✓	✓	Where possible
		Design elements to assist the inclusion of children with various <i>sensory</i> impairments	✓	✓	Where possible
Design elements to assist inclusion of children with a range of <i>intellectual</i> or <i>cognitive</i> abilities		✓	✓	Where possible	
ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION	Sensory Play	Play spaces can provide sensory appeal or opportunities to enhance children's experience of texture, sound, colour, pattern, light, smell, space and motion.	✓	✓	Where possible
	Continuous Accessible Paths of Travel	Connectivity via hard or compacted pathways to the play space, to specific activities within the play space and also to accessible amenities is an essential design element.	✓	✓	Where possible
	Accessible Amenities	It is essential to provide amenities for children and carers that are accessible (i.e. shelters, toilets, picnic tables, bench seats, car parking, water fountains and pathways).	✓	✓	Where possible
SAFETY	Compliance with Australian Playground Standards	Playground and playground equipment is designed and installed to meet current Playground Standards	✓	✓	✓
	Playground Under Surfacing	To be cost effective to supply and maintain, sustainable, increase play diversity and accessibility.	✓	✓	✓
	Shade	Some protection from the sun is to be provided by locating facilities near existing shade providing features or by planting new shade trees	✓	✓	✓
	Fencing	Consider partial fencing to limit or deter movement towards an identified danger	Where relevant	Where relevant	Where relevant
AESTHETIC QUALITY	Community Art	Incorporate commissioned art pieces or community art elements into all play spaces	✓	✓	Where possible
	Incorporating Natural Elements	Natural elements to be integrated with the play space to add interest, appeal and play value	✓	✓	Where possible
	Landscaped Borders	Landscaping around playground borders (i.e. rocks and planted mounds) to replace traditional box edging	✓	✓	✓
	Use of Timber	When timber is used in playgrounds, sustainable options are to be used wherever possible.	✓	✓	✓
SPATIAL QUALITY	Complimentary Amenities	Amenities such as shade, toilets, picnic tables, bench seats, car parking, water fountains, pathways, bins, signs, shelters and BBQ's.	✓	✓	Where possible
	Adjacent Facilities or Activities:	Available space for additional activities (i.e. ball games, kite flying, BMX track, skate park, oval, tennis courts, half court basketball are, hit up wall)	✓	✓	Where possible
	Strategic Suitability of Open Space:	The park on which the playground is to be provided is to be provided is an <i>adequate size</i>	✓	✓	✓
		<i>Accessible</i> - sited with road frontage on at least one road, central to the surrounding residential area, close to community facilities and connected to open space spines and multi-purpose trails and paths.	✓	✓	✓
	<i>Useable</i> - land to be above the 1 in 20 year flood level, have good drainage, slope to not exceed 1:20, be free of defects and have services (water, sewerage and electricity) available to the site.	✓	✓	✓	

The table on the previous page provides a summary of the discussion and directions provided earlier in this section and forms minimum standards that need to be adhered to maximise potential play value and learning, increase participation by children of all ages and abilities, minimise the risk of injury and make the play spaces interesting, welcoming and appealing to all ages.

Whether it is the Surf Coast Shire Council directly managing the design of a new or redeveloped playground in an existing park or indirectly working with a developer who is providing a new playground within a new subdivision, it is important that these guidelines are followed. These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the general guidelines provided in the Playground Hierarchy Matrix in *Section 8.3.1* of this Playground Strategy.

9.4.3 Provision of Playgrounds by Developers

Given the huge growth of urban development in parts of the Surf Coast Shire and the significant number of young families buying new properties in developing areas, the adequate provision of playgrounds is a critical issue. Important to this residential growth is the role the private sector land developers who are to an increasing extent, undertaking the planning and provision of the infrastructure for sub-divisions. Therefore there is an opportunity for Council to work in partnership with developers to ensure the adequate supply of suitable play provision in new land release areas.

The developer partnership may take the form of playgrounds developed as part of residential developments either to satisfy Council requirements of the sub-division or as a method used by many developers in order to enhance the marketability of a new estate. Alternatively, developers may provide a financial contribution to Council to assist Council in providing sufficient and appropriate playgrounds for the growing population.

When developers are providing playgrounds directly, it is important that there is good communication and consultation with relevant Council officers from the early planning stages to ensure that the park meets relevant open space guidelines and also the playground to be provided meets the minimum design guidelines provided in the Design Guidelines for Playgrounds. In this way, new and emerging communities have the benefit of a playground development that is consistent with the playground processes and outcomes that are applied across the Surf Coast Shire.

In new areas, where developers are involved in the direct provision of a playground facility, the Surf Coast Shire Council should consider making the required community consultation a condition of the planning permit and part of the sign off process for the facility design. Council must ensure that 'off the shelf' or 'catalogue' playgrounds are not provided by developers without consideration of the needs of the new community and the features unique to that community and location. Council needs to have the capacity to specify the individual items of playground equipment even if it is an "off the shelf supply" by developers.

In the growth areas of Torquay in particular, developers have a significant role to play in contributing to funding new playgrounds and associated reserves.

Playground Principle 12: Working with Developers

The Surf Coast Shire will provide a guide for developers and work in partnership to ensure new playgrounds in developing areas contribute to the diversity of playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire and respond adequately to the needs of emerging communities.

9.5 Playground Management and Maintenance Guidelines

9.5.1 Australian Playground Standards and Risk Management

The Australian Playground Standards are discussed in detail in *Section 9.4.1: Key Design Issues and Directions: sub section 9.3.1.3 Safety*). This section details the range of Australian Playground Standards available and of relevance to this section are those standards that relate to the operation, maintenance and inspection of playgrounds and play equipment including AS4685 (2004) Parts 1-6 (Playgrounds and Play Equipment), AS/NZS 4422 (1996 / 1999) for Playground Surfacing and AS/NZS 4360 (2004) for Risk Management.

The Australian Playground Standards are extremely important in relation to the everyday management and maintenance of playgrounds. Whilst Australian Playground Standards are not mandatory (i.e. not legislated) they are viewed as the minimum benchmark required for playground equipment, design, compliance, installation, maintenance and inspection.

Margaret Cavanagh, of Kidsafe NSW Inc. (2003) defines a *standard* as a “statement of the agreed minimum necessary requirement for a product or process to be fit for its’ intended purpose. The Australian Playground Standards are not intended to completely prevent injury or to provide a completely risk free play environment. Instead they provide guidelines and advice on key factors to reduce injury to children in the play environment”¹⁷.

Lynnel Migas of PlayRight Australia defines the terms *risk*, *challenge* and *hazard* in *Section 9.2.2.3* of this Playground Strategy. Lynnel Migas¹⁸ goes on to comment in another article that it is important to develop a playground safety program with rules so that all playgrounds are free of hazards. “We have a responsibility to provide regular inspections of playgrounds, playground equipment and surfaces, to identify and correct hazards, to provide maintenance and to keep records, all of which are crucial to the a safe play environment.”

Risk management in playgrounds is a major issue for Councils. Research has found that many accidents and injuries to children occur in playgrounds. Consequently, risk should be minimised, whilst at the same time providing children with an enjoyable and challenging experience. Whilst one outcome of a risk management program is a safer play environment, a second outcome is reduced insurance costs.

A risk “involves choice and is an integral part of a child’s play environment, motor skill development and learning experience. Risk allows the user to identify the challenge, evaluate the level of the challenge and then make a determination of how that challenge is to be dealt with”.¹⁹

A hazard “is a danger that may not be foreseen and /or evaluated by the user and therefore the potential for injury is hidden”.²⁰

¹⁷ Margaret Cavanagh, ‘The need to play: creating special places for play’, Playground Advisory Unit, Kidsafe NSW Inc. (2003)

¹⁸ Lynnel Migas, ‘Play by the Rules’, PlayRight Australia Pty Ltd (2003)

¹⁹ Lynnel Migas, ‘Play by the Rules’, PlayRight Australia Pty Ltd (2003)

²⁰ Lynnel Migas, ‘Play by the Rules’, PlayRight Australia Pty Ltd (2003)

9.5.2 Playground Supplier Handover Procedure

Advice to Councils from independent playground auditors is that when a playground is handed over from a playground supplier to Council following installation, a final audit on completion is required. This audit should take place on site between the Council project manager and the playground supplier. The audit will involve a thorough on site inspection of the playground to ensure that the playground, including all equipment and surfaces, meets the current Australian Playground Standards. Following this on site inspection, Council requires written notification that the playground and playground equipment complies with current Australian Standards. Before a final invoice is paid, this letter must be received and also any non-compliant items replaced. It is recommended that a clause be written into playground tender documents referring to this handover procedure. Some Councils go one step further and engage an independent playground auditor to inspect the playground after it has been installed to ensure that all items have been checked by a trained professional.

It would also be beneficial for playground suppliers (and also developers) to provide a recommended ongoing maintenance schedule which would be useful in terms of estimating ongoing costs for maintenance. Supply of electronic 'as built' documents would also assist in ongoing playground assessments.

9.5.3 Developer Playground Handover Procedure

When the land developer provides a playground within a new estate, they engage the playground supplier and Council has no direct relationship with the playground supplier in this case. It is therefore essential that Council prepare a written agreement to be signed off by the developer, that they will provide Council with a compliance report on the playground and playground equipment by an independent playground auditor prior to the handover of the playground to Council. In this way, Council can ensure that it does not inherit playgrounds that have defects that require replacement, some of which can be very costly.

9.5.4 Playground Inspections

Once Council has established that its existing play equipment and playgrounds meet current standards and are suitable for continued public use, it is important to have a regular inspection schedule. Physical inspections identify any maintenance required so that play areas remain safe for children to use. Lynnel Migas²¹, Director of PlayRight Australia Pty Ltd comments that "the first day of a new playground being opened to the public also marks the beginning of the playground's routine and preventative maintenance history".

A range of playground inspection procedures are used by Councils to ensure that playgrounds remain safe places in which to play. It is important that playground inspections are recorded for auditing purposes and that staff involved in playground inspections keep up to date with playground standards and the relevant procedures and tools to adequately assess the ongoing compliance of playgrounds to the minimum playground standards.

²¹ Lynnel Migas (Director PlayRight Australia Pty Ltd) *Is playground safety being taken seriously?* (A paper produced in 2003)

Playground Principle 13: Procedures for Handover of Playgrounds

The Surf Coast Shire will ensure that documentation is provided to guarantee that all new playgrounds handed over by playground suppliers and developers are compliant with Australian Playground Standards.

Inspection procedures used by the Surf Coast Shire Council include:

Visual Inspections

- These are basic inspections that take place whenever staff visit a park or playground area to mow grass, attend to trees, spray pathways, check BBQ's, etc.
- These inspections are important and will pick up any obvious items needing repair but alone are not adequate to ensure that playgrounds continue to meet Australian Standards.

Operational Inspections

- Council currently has a comprehensive written checklist for every playground asset which involves an up-to-date register of all of the play equipment, the age of installation, the playground supplier and the maintenance history for each piece of equipment.
- Council has a system for actioning maintenance work involving recording of the item to be replaced, the action to be undertaken and a timeline for the action to be completed.
- These inspections are thorough and can pick up items such as depth of softfall under equipment, rusted items, splintered items, worn items and broken equipment. They include checking the operation and stability of equipment, especially wear such as rubbing, rolling joints and bearings, smooth and proper operation, integrity, fixings and attachments.
- It is important that staff are trained and continue to be updated in the required playground inspection procedures for playgrounds so that a high level of safety is provided.
- The current system of operational inspections are very time consuming and labour intensive as it involves hand written checklists followed by manual keying in of information into inspection registers and when actioning items to be repaired or replaced.
- Many Councils are moving towards electronic playground inspection devices which involve the recording of information in the field on hand held devices with each playground item in each park having a unique ID linked back to Council's GIS data. Although time consuming to set up in the first instance, it saves time in the field and data can be downloaded in the office with maintenance reports and action plans automatically generated. Council should investigate the available systems to determine the feasibility of a relevant system for the Surf Coast Shire.
- The current operational inspection schedule for playgrounds is on a monthly basis, irrespective of playground classification. The Playground Hierarchy Matrix provided in Section 8.3.1 recommends that Regional Playgrounds should be inspected daily in the peak season and weekly in the off-season. District Playgrounds require a monthly inspection (although this may increase to weekly during peak season). Local Playgrounds require a monthly inspection.

Independent Playground Audit

- Currently the Surf Coast Shire obtains an Annual Compliance Report by an independent playground auditor. This audit by a person with extensive experience in playground inspections and an extensive knowledge of the Australian Playground Standards will ensure that Surf Coast Shire Playgrounds remain safe for all users.

Playground Principle 14: Playground Inspections

The Surf Coast Shire will maintain a formal and comprehensive system of playground inspections, will ensure that staff are suitably trained in the required inspection procedures and will investigate systems to improve efficiency and ability to record and report the results of playground inspections.

9.5.5 Routine Maintenance and Repairs

Routine Maintenance is the regular ongoing day to day work that is required to keep assets functioning at a specific standard, and to prevent early failure or deterioration. It is expenditure on an asset, which maintains the asset in use, but does not increase its service potential or life.

Most minor repairs to play equipment are undertaken immediately at the time of the inspection. Items considered dangerous are removed from the site or made safe immediately. Items removed from the site require webbing to be installed around the missing piece of equipment and this needs to be in place until the equipment is replaced.

In addition to scheduled or cyclic inspections as described on the previous page, it is important that other Council staff (both indoor and outdoor) report any playground problems, hazards or defects that they may notice or be made aware of in the course of their duties. There are occasions when response to a playground maintenance issue is reactive such as when a community member contacts Council about a specific problem that may have occurred since the last inspection. Such reports made by Council staff or members of the community are acted upon as soon as possible.

Routine maintenance tasks include:

- routine visual inspections (as part of general park maintenance);
- rubbish removal, graffiti removal and general equipment cleaning;
- minor equipment repairs and replacements;
- raking and topping up (and when required rotary hoeing) of soft fall; and
- mowing around play space area and maintaining play space garden beds and vegetation.



9.5.6 Playground Upgrades and Extensions

Following a community engagement process in the development of a playground, it is important that Council's relationship with that community and involvement with the playground asset is more than merely providing routine asset maintenance.

Throughout the life of a playground, it is important to ensure that a playground is monitored and reviewed to ensure that it is functioning well, it is providing good play value and that it is appealing and attractive for users. In this context, playground renewal can involve the addition of new pieces of equipment, the inclusion of accessible items and features and the integration of community artwork or landscape to the site.

This playground strategy provides the justification for a range of playground upgrades or extensions throughout the local and district playground facilities so that they meet the recommended minimum standards for their relevant classification in the playground hierarchy.

9.5.7 Playground Depreciation / Life Cycle

Different playgrounds, constructed of different materials and by different manufacturers, age at different rates. Providing more diverse, individually designed and interesting playground environments often involves the utilisation of different design approaches, construction techniques and materials use, some of which may have a lesser life expectancy (e.g. timber over metal or plastic). Observations of Surf Coast Shire playgrounds show that the average life expectancy of a playground, prior to requiring replacement or a full upgrade / refurbishment is in the order of 12-15 years.

As a general rule, playgrounds in coastal areas of the Surf Coast Shire or in areas of extremely high use reach their maximum life and therefore need to be replaced every 12 years. In rural areas with predominantly residential use, the replacement of playgrounds should occur every 15 years.

9.5.8 Dogs

Playgrounds should be safe places for children to play and dogs around playgrounds should be on a lead. The Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria (PRAV) recommends that “all dogs must be on a lead and under the supervision of the dog owner in public playgrounds and/or within 50 metres of a public playground”²²

Surf Coast Shire Council’s current regulations, adopted in 2007, declare that there are ‘no dogs allowed’ in playground equipment areas. Signage in all Council playgrounds (*example shown in the picture below middle*) supports this regulation. There are however, under the same regulations, a number of playgrounds that are surrounded by D1 – Off Leash areas (*example shown in the picture below left*), which is inconsistent with the recommendation from PRAV above. Please refer to the recommendation opposite.



Current signage to indicate the regulation D1 – Off Leash Area where dogs are permitted ‘off leash’ within 50m of a playground area.



Current Surf Coast Shire signage to indicate that dogs are not permitted within the playground area.

Playground Principle 15: Playground Life-cycle

Playgrounds and playground equipment in the Surf Coast Shire will have an assumed maximum lifespan of 12-15 years depending on location and use.

RECOMMENDATION 9

DOGS

Council regulations should be changed to follow the PRAV recommendation that “all dogs be on a lead and under the supervision of the dog owner within 50 metres of a playground”. Off-Leash areas may apply outside of this 50 metre zone but the preference is for dogs to be on a lead in parks where a playground is located. Council should retain the ‘no dogs allowed’ regulation in the actual play equipment area.



Dogs tied up within a playground space risks frightening a child or the dog.

²² Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria website www.prav.asn.au

9.5.9 Graffiti and Vandalism

Graffiti in community spaces can cause great concern to members of the community and to those involved in or responsible for the provision and maintenance of these spaces. If graffiti is left in community spaces it is unsightly and it has a negative effect on the users of the space. Graffiti needs to be removed as soon as possible although should not be ranked higher in importance than equipment which may have been vandalised and deemed unsafe for use.

Vandalism is a complex issue, however there are some simple strategies which may help to reduce its impact.

- A prime deterrent against vandalism is to make parks attractive to large numbers of 'legitimate users', whose presence will deter those with less legitimate intentions;
- Siting of parks and structures so that they can be kept under informal surveillance from streets and houses may also help.
- Constant, quick repairs after damage will reduce the impression that the municipality does not care about its reserves and reduce opportunities for further damage.

9.5.10 Facility, safety and interpretative signage

Playground name signs and directional signage on roadways are important to identify and promote the Surf Coast Shire playgrounds.

Other specific signs that may be required in playgrounds depending on its location and use include:

- hazard warnings for nearby dangers (i.e. water ways);
- Council by-laws (i.e. dogs);
- General information (i.e. conditions of use, disability access, educational/interpretative signage);
- Age appropriate information to advise parents and children about age appropriateness of certain pieces of equipment (i.e. signage on the flying fox at Lake Pertobe in Warrnambool); and
- Sun Smart information with tips to reduce exposure to solar radiation such as wearing adequate protective clothing and hats, applying and re-applying sunscreen, advice on visiting outside of the hottest parts of the day and where to go to find a playground with good shade.

9.5.11 Marketing and Promotion

Marketing play spaces to potential users is an important part of managing them. Information in brochures or on the Council website is particularly important for families who are looking for play spaces that meet their particular needs. Marketing material about play spaces should include:

- Location / address of playground and a brief description of the space and its major features;
- A photo of the playground or unique features of interest within it;
- Suitable age / development levels;
- Classification / type (i.e. Regional, District, Local) and what is provided to complement the play space (i.e. pathways, car parking, toilets, picnic facilities, shelter, shade, accessibility); and
- Nearby facilities (i.e. ball games areas, beaches, nature walks, skate parks, BMX tracks, cafés).

Playground Principle 16: Playground Signage

Appropriate signage will be provided in playgrounds in accordance with Council's style guidelines, in keeping with the character of the play space, and to fulfil Council's risk management requirements.



SECTION 10 RESOURCING - PRIORITY PLAN & FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

When clarifying budgets and priorities for funding, it is important to first define the following terms:

New Playground Expenditure Expenditure on the construction of a new playground asset where a playground has not existed previously.

Renewal Expenditure Renewal expenditure refers to major works that are required to renew, replace or re-establish an old and tired asset and to restore its function. Renewal expenditure is a capital cost.

For the purposes of this strategy, renewal expenditure has 2 components:

- *Playground Renewal (Upgrade / Extension) Program*
Improving or upgrading of the functionality of an existing asset during its lifecycle. This involves adding interest and play value to an existing asset, upgrading the asset so that it meets recommended standards for the relevant classification in the playground hierarchy and extensions of the playground to meet changing community needs during its lifecycle.
- *Playground Renewal (Total Asset Replacement) Program*
For the purposes of this Playground Strategy, renewal expenditure is required when an asset reaches the end of its recommended life and requires replacement. This renewal expenditure is also a capital cost.

A Total Asset Replacement Program has been developed for Surf Coast Shire Playgrounds and this program will commence in Year 3 of this Strategy.

Maintenance Expenditure Expenditure on the regular ongoing day to day work that is required to keep assets functioning at a specific standard, and to prevent early failure or deterioration. It is expenditure on an asset, which maintains the asset in use, but does not increase its service potential or life.

For the purposes of the Playground Strategy, maintenance expenditure has been calculated on a per playground basis with a sliding scale according to a playground classification.

10.1 Playground Development Priority Plan

A playground development plan has been developed for the next 10 years. This plan takes into consideration the areas of:

- **Playground Asset Maintenance** (*Section 10.1.1*);
- **Playground Renewal (Total Asset Replacement)** (*Section 10.1.2*);
- **Playground Renewal (Upgrades and Extensions)** (*Section 10.1.3*); and
- **New Playground Developments** (*Section 10.1.4*).

10.1.1 Playground Asset Maintenance

Currently, the maintenance program for Surf Coast Shire playground assets involves the following components:

- *Routine Maintenance* (refer *Section 9.5.5* for more detail) is the regular ongoing day to day work that is required to keep assets functioning at a specific standard, and to prevent early failure or deterioration. It is expenditure on an asset, which maintains the asset in use, but does not increase its service potential or life. Routine Maintenance includes documented playground inspections carried out by Council staff.

Based on current Surf Coast Shire cost estimates for routine maintenance items and services, it is recommended that the following budgets apply for the maintenance of playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire: \$1000 per site for local playgrounds per year; \$3000 per site for district playgrounds per year; and \$10000 per site for regional playgrounds per year.

- *Annual independent playground safety audit* – this is required to ensure that all Surf Coast Shire playgrounds are inspected by qualified personnel. This safety audit will include a thorough safety inspection of all playground equipment and soft fall and the recommendations from the audit report will be carried out by Shire staff as part of their playground maintenance program.

A budget of \$5,000 per annum is recommended for the independent playground safety audit.

Section 9.5.5 details the procedure undertaken for routine maintenance and inspection of Surf Coast Shire playgrounds. It is important to continually evaluate inspection and maintenance procedures to ensure that these are as cost effective as possible.

RECOMMENDATION 10

PLAYGROUND MAINTENANCE

10.1 Playground Maintenance Budget - The annual recommended budget for playground equipment / area maintenance including in-house inspections is \$1000 per site for local playgrounds; \$3000 per site for district playgrounds; and \$10000 per site for regional playgrounds.

A \$5000 budget per annum for an independent safety audit of playgrounds is recommended.

10.2 Playground Maintenance Inspections – investigate systems to improve efficiency and ability to record, report and action results of playground Inspections

Future Maintenance Budget

When applying the recommendations for playground maintenance to the current Surf Coast Shire managed playground assets, (Regional - 0, District - 7 and Local – 23), a budget of \$49,000 per annum should be provided to carry out the routine maintenance requirements for playgrounds.

When a new playground is constructed or handed over by a developer, the maintenance costs for those playgrounds must be reflected in the maintenance budget.

Based on the recommended maintenance costs per playground, a maintenance budget (which reflects the new playground program) is recommended over a 10 year period in **Table 15** below:

Table 15: Recommended 10 Year Playground Asset Maintenance Budget

YEAR	PLAYGROUND TYPE (SURF COAST SHIRE MANAGED)	PLAYGROUND TYPE (SURF COAST SHIRE MANAGED)			ROUTINE MAINTENANCE COST	ANNUAL AUDIT COST	TOTAL COST
		REGIONAL	DISTRICT	LOCAL			
0	CURRENT	0	7	23	\$25,000	\$5,000	\$30,000
1	2011/12	0	7	24	\$45,000	\$5,000	\$50,000
2	2012/13	1	7	26	\$57,000	\$5,000	\$62,000
3	2013/14	1	8	27	\$61,000	\$5,000	\$66,000
4	2014/15	1	8	30	\$64,000	\$5,000	\$69,000
5	2015/16	1	8	33	\$67,000	\$5,000	\$72,000
6	2016/17	1	8	35	\$69,000	\$5,000	\$74,000
7	2017/18	1	8	37	\$71,000	\$5,000	\$76,000
8	2018/19	1	8	39	\$73,000	\$5,000	\$78,000
9	2019/20	1	8	41	\$75,000	\$5,000	\$80,000
10	2020/21	1	8	42	\$76,000	\$5,000	\$81,000
TOTAL					\$658,000	\$50,000	\$708,000

Notes :

1. Recommended costs are based on \$1,000 per annum for each local playground, \$3,000 per annum for each district playground and \$10,000 per annum for each regional playground
2. New playground program can be viewed in **Table 22**
3. Inflation - Costs of playground maintenance to increase by CPI on costs shown from base year 2011/12

10.1.2 Playground Renewal (Total Asset Replacement)

A specific budget allocation is required to fund the renewal of playgrounds assets. Playgrounds require renewal or replacement when they reach the end of their life cycle. The recommended lifecycle for Surf Coast Shire playgrounds is 12 – 15 years (*refer to Section 9.5.7 for more detail*).

Table 18 on the 2 pages following, shows a detailed summary of the renewal works required at each of the 30 Surf Coast Shire managed playgrounds in relation to (A) Renewal (Upgrades or Extensions) to increase play value and for compliance to classification level and (B) Renewal (Total Asset Replacement) at end of asset lifecycle. The Total Asset Replacement (B) of the existing district and local playgrounds is summarised in **Table 16** and **Table 17** below. Five of the seven existing district playgrounds will require full asset replacement within Years 5 – 9 at a total cost of \$975,000. 14 of the 23 existing local playgrounds will require full asset replacement within Years 3 – 10 at a total cost of \$980,000.

Table 16: Recommended District Playground Renewal (Total Asset Replacement) Program

YEAR	DISTRICT PLAYGROUND	COST
5	2015/16 Coogoorah Park	\$195,000
6	2016/17 Aireys Inlet Reserve	\$195,000
7	2017/18 Winchelsea Riverbank Reserve	\$195,000
8	2018/19 Deans Marsh Reserve	\$195,000
9	2019/20 Bellbrae Reserve	\$195,000
TOTAL		\$975,000

Note: Inflation - costs of playground supply to increase by CPI on costs shown from base year 2011/12

Table 17: Recommended Local Playground Renewal (Total Asset Replacement) Program

YEAR	LOCAL PLAYGROUND	COST	TOTAL
3	2013/14 Tennis Club 19 Cameron Rd	\$50,000	\$100,000
	Mount Moriac Reserve	\$50,000	
4	2014/15 Connewarre Reserve	\$90,000	\$90,000
5	2015/16 Jan Juc Creek Reserve / Carnarvon Ave	\$90,000	\$90,000
6	2016/17 Kalkarra Reserve / Kalkarra Cres	\$50,000	\$100,000
	Bob Pettitt Reserve Pavilion	\$50,000	
7	2017/18 St Anne's Reserve	\$90,000	\$190,000
	Torquay Blvd Reserve	\$50,000	
	Bambra Hall / Reserve	\$50,000	
8	2018/19 Freshwater Creek Reserve	\$90,000	\$230,000
	Dwyer St	\$50,000	
	Deep Creek Reserve / Orungal Crt	\$90,000	
9	2019/20 Great Ocean Views Playground	\$90,000	\$90,000
10	2020/21 Bark Hut Reserve	\$90,000	\$90,000
TOTAL		\$980,000	\$980,000

Note: Inflation - costs of playground supply to increase by CPI on costs shown from base year 2011/12

RECOMMENDATION 11

PLAYGROUND RENEWAL (TOTAL ASSET REPLACEMENT) OF DISTRICT PLAYGROUNDS WITHIN 10 YEAR PERIOD

Within the next 10 years, five of the seven existing district playgrounds will require full asset replacement at the end of their life cycle. This replacement occurs within Years 5 to 9 (2015-2020) at a cost of \$975,000 over that 5 year period.

RECOMMENDATION 12

PLAYGROUND RENEWAL (TOTAL ASSET REPLACEMENT) OF LOCAL PLAYGROUNDS WITHIN 10 YEAR PERIOD

Within the next 10 years, fourteen of the twenty three existing local playgrounds will require full asset replacement at the end of their life cycle. This replacement occurs within Years 3 to 10 (2013-2021) at a cost of \$980,000 over that 8 year period.

TABLE 18: EXISTING PLAYGROUND RENEWAL RECOMMENDED WORKS AND BUDGET (10 year program 2011/12 – 2020/21)

Programme commenced 2010/11

Includes (A) Upgrades or Extensions - to increase play value, functionality and for compliance to classification level (B) Total Asset Replacement - at end of asset lifecycle

TOWN	ID CODE	LEVEL	PLAYGROUND	AGE	LIFE CYCLE	REPLACEMENT YEAR	VALUE (when installed)	WORKS REQUIRED		COST	PLAY VALUE RATING
								A: Renewal / Upgrade Works	B: Renewal / Total Asset Replacement		
Torquay	SCS 1	LOCAL large	Deep Creek Reserve / Orungal Crt	2001 2006	15 years	2017	\$15,000	A	Pads under swings and slide (<i>to be completed in 10/11</i>) Edging / planting / shade trees (<i>to be completed in 10/11</i>) Addition of accessible items and community artwork (12/13)	\$2500 \$4000 \$20,000	MEDIUM
								B	Total Asset Replacement in 2018 /19	\$90,000	
	SCS 2	LOCAL large	St Anne's Reserve (at The Sands) / The Esplanade	2005	12 years	2017	\$30,000	A	Pads under swings(<i>to be completed in 10/11</i>) Upgrade edging with rocks and planting / shade (11/12)	\$1500 \$6000	MEDIUM
								B	Total Asset Replacement in 2017 /18	\$90,000	
	SCS 3	LOCAL large	Quay Reserve, Quay Blvd	2008	15 years	2023	\$30,000	A	Need landscaping / planting around site (13/14) Addition of accessible items / sensory items (13/14)	\$5000 \$5,000	MEDIUM
	SCS 4	LOCAL large	Sarabande Crescent, 6A Sarabande Cres	2008	15 years	2023	\$30,000	A	New accessible / sensory items (13/14)	\$5,000	MEDIUM
	SCS 5	LOCAL large	Great Ocean Views Playground 31 Ocean Views Cres and	2003	15 years	2018	\$25,000	A	Swing and slide pads required (<i>to be completed in 10/11</i>)	\$2,500	MEDIUM
								B	Total Asset Replacement in 2019 /20	\$90,000	
SCS 6	LOCAL large	Ocean Acres / Sheoak Crt	2005	15 years	2020	\$35,000	A	Swing Pads (<i>to be completed in 10/11</i>) Developer Contribution for future half court basketball (12/13)	\$1500 \$15,000	MEDIUM	
SCS 7	LOCAL small	Frog Hollow 1A Frog Hollow / Cnr Messmate Rd	2006	15 years	2021	\$35,000	A	Edging / planting / shade trees (<i>to be completed in 10/11</i>) Addition of accessible items and community artwork (14/15)	\$2000 \$7,000	MEDIUM	
SCS 8	LOCAL large	The Hill Top Playground Cnr Fischer St and Nautical Rise	2009	15 years	2024	\$70,000	A	New accessible / sensory items (14/15)	\$5,000	MEDIUM	
Jan Juc	SCS 9	LOCAL large	Jan Juc Creek Reserve / Carnarvon Ave	1999 2005	15 years 15 years	2014 2020	\$27,000	B	Total Asset Replacement in 2015/16	\$90,000	MEDIUM
	SCS10	LOCAL small	Torquay Blvd Reserve	2001	15 years	2016	\$6,000	A	Upgrade accessibility to site /landscaping(11/12) Inclusion of new/unique features (11/12) Swing pads required (11/12)	\$4,000 \$6,000 \$1500	HIGH
							B	Total Asset Replacement in 2017 /18	\$50,000		
	SCS 11	DISTRICT	Bob Pettitt Reserve "Coast to Creek" Playground Sunset Strip	2009	15 years	2024	\$150,000	A	Timber sculpture component required (11/12) Additional elements –balance walk (14/15) Accessible item - rubber soft fall for hammock swing (11/12)	\$10,000 \$4,000 \$6,000	LOW
SCS 12	LOCAL small	Bob Pettitt Reserve Pavilion	2001	15 years	2016	\$10,000	B	Total Asset Replacement in 2016 /17	\$50,000	MEDIUM	
Bellbrae	SCS13	DISTRICT	Bellbrae Reserve	2004	15 years	2019	\$30,000	A	Improve accessibility (equipment) (14/15) Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities) (14/15)	\$10,000 \$10,000	MEDIUM
							B	Total Asset Replacement in 2019 /20	\$195,000		
Anglesea	SCS14	DISTRICT	Coogoorah Park, River Reserve Rd	1999	15 years	2014	\$70,000 \$10,000	A	Improve accessibility (equipment) (11/12) Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities) (11/12) Swing and slide pads (11/12)	\$10,000 \$10,000 \$2,500	MEDIUM
							B	Total Asset Replacement 2015/16	\$195,000		
	SCS 16	LOCAL small	Tennis Club 19 Cameron Rd	1998	15 years	2013	\$3000	B	Total Asset Replacement (13/14)	\$50,000	HIGH
SCS 15	LOCAL large	Lions Park	2010	12 years	2022	\$45,000	A	Stage 2 extension to lift to Local (large) standard (11/12) Improve accessibility (equipment) (14/15) Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities)(14/15)	\$35,000 \$5,000 \$5,000	HIGH MEDIUM	

TOWN	ID CODE	LEVEL	PLAYGROUND	AGE	LIFE CYCLE	REPLACE MENT YEAR	VALUE (when installed)	WORKS REQUIRED		COST	PLAY VALUE RATING
								A: Renewal / Upgrade Works	B: Renewal / Total Asset Replacement		
Aireys Inlet	SCS 17	DISTRICT	Aireys Inlet Reserve (Painkalac Creek)	2002	12 years	2014	\$25,000	A	Additional Landscape Works (planting, partial fencing) (11/12) Public art renewal (11/12) Improve accessibility (equipment) (11/12) Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities) (11/12) Rubber pads for swings and slide (11/12)	\$11,500 \$5,000 \$10,000 \$5,000 \$2,500	MEDIUM
							B	Total Asset Replacement in 2016/17	\$195,000		
	SCS 18	LOCAL large	Bark Hut Reserve 10 Inlet Crt	2007	12 years	2020	\$30,000	A	Improve accessibility (equipment) (13/14/ Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities) (13/14)	\$5,000 \$5,000	MEDIUM
							B	Total Asset Replacement 2020/21	\$90,000		
	SCS19	LOCAL small	Aireys Inlet Community Centre	2009	15 years	2024	\$15,000	A	New accessible / sensory items (14/15)	\$5,000	MEDIUM
Deans Marsh	SCS 20	DISTRICT	Deans Marsh Memorial Park	2004	12 years	2016	\$35,000	A	Additional Landscape Works including planting (12/13) Improve accessibility (equipment) (12/13) Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities) (12/13) Need swing and slide pads (11/12)	\$6,500 \$10,000 \$20,000 \$2,500	LOW
								B	Total Asset Replacement 2018/19	\$195,000	
Bambra	SCS 21	LOCAL small	Bambra Hall / Reserve (Greg Drayton Memorial Reserve)	2001	15 years	2016	\$5000	A	Need additional item (2012/13)	\$10,000	HIGH
								B	Total Asset Replacement (2017/18)	\$50,000	
Winchelsea	SCS22	DISTRICT	Riverbank Reserve (Barwon Tce)	2001	15 years	2016	\$70,000	A	Additional Landscaping / retaining wall partial fencing (13/14) Public art renewal (11/12) Improve accessibility (equipment) (13/14) Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities) (13/14) Swing and slide pads (11/12)	\$5,000 \$2,000 \$10,000 \$20,000 \$2,500	LOW
								B	Total Asset Replacement 2017/18	\$195,000	
	SCS23	LOCAL small	Dwyer St	2003 1995	15 years 15 years	2018 2010	\$7,500	A	Shade trees and landscape around playground edges (<i>to be completed in 10/11</i>) Swing and slide pads (<i>to be completed in 10/11</i>) New rockers and additional items needed (13/14)	\$2500 \$2500 \$10,000	HIGH
							B	Total Asset Replacement 2018/19	\$50,000		
Mount Moriac	SCS 24	LOCAL small	Mount Moriac Reserve	2001	15 years	2016	\$15,000	A	Shade trees and landscape around playground edges (postponed to 13/14 when playground due for replacement)	\$5000	HIGH
								B	Total Asset Replacement / relocation (2013/14)	\$50,000	
Moriac	SCS 25	LOCAL large	Newling Reserve behind Moriac Preschool	2009	15 years	2024	\$14,000	A	Improve accessibility (equipment) (14/15) Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities) (14/15)	\$5000 \$5000	MEDIUM
	SCS 26	LOCAL small	Community Centre playground	2006	15 years	2021	\$20,000	A	Improve accessibility (equipment) (13/14) Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities) (13/14)	\$4000 \$4000	MEDIUM
	SCS 27	DISTRICT	Newling Reserve All Access Playground	2006	15 years	2021	\$70,000	A	Edging / planting / shade trees (11/12)	\$1,500	LOW
Freshwater Creek	SCS28	LOCAL small	Freshwater Creek Reserve	2001	15 years	2016	\$7,000	A	Additional items needed (13/14)	\$5000	HIGH
								B	Total Asset Replacement (2018/19)	\$50,000	
Mount Duneed	SCS29	LOCAL small	Kalkarra Reserve / Kalkarra Cres	2001	15 years	2016	\$12,000	A	Additional items needed (12/13)	\$7,500	MEDIUM
								B	Total Asset Replacement in (2016/17)	\$50,000	
Connewarre	SCS 30	LOCAL large	Connewarre Reserve	2000	15 years	2015	\$7000	A	Landscaping elements (11/12)	\$10,000	MEDIUM
								B	Total Asset Replacement in (2014/2015)	\$90,000	

Notes : 1. Recommended Budget Allocation (per annum): Playground Asset Renewal - (as per Table 16,17, 19, 20)

2. \$30,000 pa playground upgrade / extension contingency for existing playgrounds for Year 6-10 which may purchase additional items of equipment to meet changing community demographics/ needs.

3. Inflation Costs of playground supply to increase by CPI on costs shown from base year 2011/12

10.1.3 Playground Renewal (Upgrades and Extensions)

Sections 9.5.6 and 10.1.2 describe the component of playground renewal which includes playground upgrades and extension works. Throughout the life of a playground, it is important to ensure that a playground is monitored and reviewed to ensure that it is functioning well, it is providing good play value and that it is appealing and attractive for users. In this context, playground renewal can involve the addition of new pieces of equipment, the inclusion of accessible items and features and the integration of community artwork or landscape to the site. Following the installation of a playground, an ongoing commitment to that playground asset beyond routine maintenance is required so that its function and purpose in that community continues to be effective.

Table 18 on the previous 2 pages, shows a detailed summary of the renewal works required at each of the 30 Surf Coast Shire managed playgrounds in relation to (A) Renewal (Upgrades or Extensions) to increase play value and for compliance to classification level and (B) Renewal (Total Asset Replacement) at end of asset lifecycle. The Playground Upgrade / Extension Program (A) for the existing district and local playgrounds is summarised in Table 19 and Table 20.

Table 19: Recommended Existing District Playground Renewal (Upgrade/Extension) Program (Years 1-4)

YEAR	LOCATION	WORKS	COST	TOTAL	
1	2011/12	Bob Pettitt Reserve	Timber sculpture component required Rubber under surfacing for hammock swing	\$10,000 \$6,000	\$81,000
		Coogoorah Park	Improve accessibility (equipment) Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities) Rubber pads for swings and slides	\$10,000 \$10,000 \$2,500	
	Newling Reserve	Edging / planting / shade trees	\$1,500		
	Winchelsea Riverbank	Public art renewal Rubber pads for swings and slide	\$2,000 \$2,500		
	Aireys Inlet Reserve	Additional Landscape Works (planting, partial fencing) Public art renewal	\$11,500 \$5,000		
		Improve accessibility (equipment) Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities) Rubber pads for swings and slide	\$10,000 \$5,000 \$2,500		
		Deans Marsh	Rubber pads for swings and slide	\$2,500	
	2	2012/13	Deans Marsh	Additional Landscape Works including planting Improve accessibility (equipment) Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities)	
All district playgrounds			Completion of swing / slide rubber pad program	\$15,000	
3	2013/14	Winchelsea Riverbank	Additional Landscape Works / retaining wall partial fencing Improve accessibility (equipment) Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities)	\$5,000 \$10,000 \$20,000	\$35,000
4	2014/15	Bellbrae Reserve	Improve accessibility (equipment) Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities)	\$10,000 \$10,000	\$24,000
		Bob Pettitt Reserve	Additional elements –balance walk	\$4,000	
TOTAL			\$191,500	\$191,500	

Note: Inflation - costs of playground supply to increase by CPI on costs shown from base year 2011/12

It is recommended that these works be progressively carried out in Years 1 to 4 with a total budget of \$191,500.

[REFER TO RECOMMENDATION 4 PROVIDED IN SECTION 9.1](#)

Table 20: Recommended Existing Local Playground Renewal (Upgrade and Extension) Program (Yr 1-4)

YEAR	LOCATION	WORKS	COST	TOTAL	
1	2011/12	Ang Lions Park (Stg2)	Stage 2 extension needed for local large classification	\$35,000	\$77,500
		Anne's Reserve	Upgrade edging with rocks and planting / shade	\$6,000	
		Ocean Acres	Developer Contribution for future half court basketball	\$15,000	
		Torquay Blvd Reserve	Upgrade accessibility to site /landscaping	\$4,000	
			Inclusion of new/unique features	\$6,000	
			Swing pads required	\$1,500	
			Landscaping elements	\$10,000	
2	2012/13	Bambra Hall / Reserve	Need additional item	\$10,000	\$47,500
		Kalkarra Reserve	Additional items needed	\$7,500	
		Deep Creek Reserve	Addition of accessible items and community artwork	\$20,000	
		All local playgrounds	Completion of swing and slide pad program	\$10,000	
3	2013/14	Quay Reserve	Need landscaping / planting around	\$5,000	\$53,000
			Addition of accessible items / sensory items	\$5,000	
		Sarabande Crescent	New accessible / sensory items	\$5,000	
		Moriac Comm Centre	Improve accessibility (equipment)	\$4,000	
			Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities)	\$4,000	
		Freshwater Creek	Additional items needed	\$5,000	
		Bark Hut Reserve	Improve accessibility (equipment)	\$5,000	
			Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities)	\$5,000	
		Dwyer St	New rockers and additional items needed	\$10,000	
		Mount Moriac	Shade trees and landscape around playground edges	\$5,000	
4	2014/15	Hill Top Playground	New accessible / sensory items	\$5,000	\$37,000
		Frog Hollow	Addition of accessible items and community artwork	\$7,000	
		Clerke Crt	Improve accessibility (equipment)	\$5,000	
			Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities)	\$5,000	
		Lions Park	Improve accessibility (equipment)	\$5,000	
			Improve accessibility (infrastructure / amenities)	\$5,000	
			TOTAL	\$215,000	\$215,000

Note: Inflation - costs of playground supply to increase by CPI on costs shown from base year 2011/12

Playground Upgrade / Extension Contingency

Following the completion of the Year 1 - 4 existing local playground upgrade and extension program and the completion of the Year 1 - 4 existing district playground upgrade and extension program, it is recommended that a \$30,000 per annum playground upgrade / extension contingency for existing playgrounds for Year 5-10 be provided for the purpose of purchasing additional items of equipment to meet changing community demographics/ needs.

It is recommended that these works be progressively carried out in Years 1 to 4 with a total budget of \$215,000.

[REFER TO RECOMMENDATION 5 PROVIDED IN SECTION 9.1](#)

TABLE 21: EXISTING PLAYGROUND RENEWAL (UPGRADE / EXTENSION) 10 YEAR PROGRAM SUMMARY (2011/12 - 2020/21)

YEAR	CATEGORY	COST	TOTAL COST
1	2011/12	Local Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	158,500
		District Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	
2	2012/13	Local Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$99,000
		District Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	
3	2013/14	Local Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$88,000
		District Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	
4	2014/15	Local Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$61,000
		District Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	
5	2015/16	Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Contingency	\$30,000
6	2016/17	Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Contingency	\$30,000
7	2017/18	Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Contingency	\$30,000
8	2018/19	Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Contingency	\$30,000
9	2019/20	Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Contingency	\$30,000
10	2020/21	Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Contingency	\$30,000
TOTAL		\$586,500	\$586,500

Note: Inflation - costs of playground supply to increase by CPI on costs shown from base year 2011/12

10.1.4 New Playground Developments

Based on the recommendations provided in **Table 4 (Playground Hierarchy Matrix)** in *Section 8.3.1*, a summary of the cost for new Regional, District and Local Playgrounds according to their level in the hierarchy is as follows:

COST COMPONENT	REGIONAL	DISTRICT	LOCAL PLAYGROUND	
	PLAYGROUND	PLAYGROUND	Large	Small
Playground Equipment Cost Estimate	\$250,000	\$150,000	\$65,000	\$40,000
Preparation of Landscape Plan / Playground Design Costs	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$2,500
Landscape Works	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$15,000	\$5,000
Public Art / Features Works	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$2,500
TOTAL COST	\$340,000	\$195,000	\$90,000	\$50,000

The costs for these playgrounds are at 2011 prices and a CPI increase would be needed following the base 2011/12 year of the strategy. **Table 22** on the following page shows the recommended new playground budget.

Funding for new playgrounds is required to be met through Council's capital works program, developer contributions (cash contribution of direct playground provision) and through external grants.

TABLE 22: PROPOSED NEW PLAYGROUND PROGRAM / BUDGET (10 year program 2011/12 – 2020/21)

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE ON FUTURE / NEW PLAYGROUND DEVELOPMENTS

TOWN	ID	PLAYGROUND	PLAYGROUND CLASSIFICATION	PROPOSED FUNDING	COUNCIL COST (SCS)	EXTERNAL COST (EXT)	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	
Torquay	F1	Civic / Community Precinct	District	Council / Sport & Rec Vic (Minor)/Ext (other)	\$115,000	\$80,000			SCS EXT								
	F2	South Beach Estate (to east of Fischer St)	Local (large)	Council / Dev Contribution (TJJDCP) **	\$19,350	\$70,650				SCS EXT							
	F3	Draper Land Reserve (off Horseshoe Bend Rd)	Local (large)	Council / Dev Contribution (TJJDCP)	\$19,350	\$70,650					SCS EXT						
	F4	South Beach Road	Local (small)	Council / Dev Contribution (TJJDCP)	\$10,750	\$39,250										SCS EXT	
	F5	Whites Beach (Funded 10/11 and due for construction June/July 2011)	Local (large)	Council <i>Not included in figures</i>	\$80,000 FUNDED 10/11		SCS (10/11 funded)										
	F6	End of Nautical Rise	Local (large)	Council / Dev Contribution (TJJDCP)	\$19,350	\$70,650		SCS EXT									
	F7	Briody Drive Estate / Deep Creek Reserve	Local (small)	Council / Dev Contribution (TJJDCP)	\$10,750	\$39,250								SCS EXT			
	F8	Surfview Estate	Local (large)	Council / Dev Contribution (TJJDCP)	\$19,350	\$70,650			SCS EXT								
	F9	Spring Valley Drive (next bike park)	Local (large)	Council	\$90,000			SCS									
Jan Juc	F10	Bluewater Estate –Marner Close and Seaview Rise)	Local (large)	Council	\$90,000					SCS							
Anglesea	F11	4 Kings / Anglesea Riverbank	Regional	Council / RDV/Sport & Rec Vic (Major)	\$150,000	\$190,000	SCS/EX Stage 1 FUNDED	SCS EXT Stge 2									
	F12	Point Roadknight	Local (large)	Council / GORCC / Sport & Rec Vic	\$20,000	\$70,000					SCS EXT						
Aireys Inlet / Fairhaven	F13	Moggs Creek Reserve	Local (small)	Council	\$50,000								SCS				
Lorne	F14	Stony Creek Reserve	Local (large)	Council	\$90,000											SCS	
Wurdale	F15	Wurdale Hall	Local (small)	Council	\$50,000					SCS							
Winch-elsea	F16	New estate Olney St	Local (large)	Council	\$90,000								SCS				
	F17	Eastern Reserve	Local (small)	Council / Eastern Reserve COM	\$30,000	\$20,000								SCS EXT			
	F18	Hesse St	Local (large)	Council	\$90,000											SCS	
	F19	Reserve off Beal / Trebeck	Local (small)	Council	\$50,000						SCS						
Modewarre	F20	Small playground at Modewarre hall / reserve	Local (small)	Council	\$50,000							SCS					
Moriac	F21	Thompson's Creek Reserve	Local (small)	Council / Dev Contribution *	\$40,000	\$10,000								SCS EXT			
TOTAL COST – COUNCIL					\$1,103,900		\$100,000	\$159,350	\$134,350	\$159,350	\$89,350	\$140,000	\$60,750	\$70,000	\$100,750	\$90,000	
TOTAL COST - OTHERS						\$731,100	50,000	\$210,650	\$150,650	\$70,650	\$140,650		\$39,250	\$30,000	\$39,250		
TOTAL COST					\$1,835,000		\$150,000	\$370,000	\$285,000	\$230,000	\$230,000	\$140,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$140,000	\$90,000	

Notes : * Paid as part of permit condition for Thompsons Creek development

Inflation - Costs of playground supply to increase by CPI on costs shown from base year 2011

** Playgrounds developed as part of developer contribution plan are for Torquay Jan Juc are funded at ratio of 78.5% (developer cost) and 21.5% (Council cost)

As a result of a thorough assessment of the supply of and demand for playgrounds within the Surf Coast Shire, **Table 22** on the previous page shows the recommended New Playground Budget for the next 10 years.

Regional Playgrounds

A Regional Playground located within the Anglesea Riverbank Reserve has been proposed within this strategy. It is recommended that this playground be developed in stages from 2011 to 2013 as a play space for all abilities. This proposed playground would require a minimum budget of \$340,000 (based on 2011 costs) including play equipment, design, landscape and public art components. External funding would be sought to fund part of this project.

District Playgrounds

A new District Playground has been proposed for Torquay within the new Civic / Community Precinct. It is expected that this playground would be developed in 2013/2014 as a play space for all abilities and at a minimum budget of \$195,000 (based on 2011 costs). External funding would be sought to fund part of this project.

Local Playgrounds

A further 19 local playgrounds have been recommended to be developed in the Surf Coast Shire over the next 10 years (18 on Council managed land and 1 on GORCC managed land). 7 of these playgrounds are expected to be part funded by pre-existing and future developer contributions and 2 are expected to be part funded through an external agency. 10 playgrounds would require total funding through Council's Capital Works Program although every effort would be made to identify external grants or sources to offset some of these costs. *Note: the Whites Beach Playground is due to be delivered by the end of 2010/11 and is listed as a proposed playground but is not included in the budget figures below.*

Table 23 FUTURE NEW LOCAL PLAYGROUND BUDGET

YEAR	SURF COAST SHIRE COST	EXTERNAL COST	TOTAL	
1	2011/12			
2	2012/13	\$109,350	\$70,650	\$180,000
3	2013/14	\$19,350	\$70,650	\$90,000
4	2014/15	\$159,350	\$70,650	\$230,000
5	2015/16	\$89,350	\$140,650	\$230,000
6	2016/17	\$140,000		\$140,000
7	2017/18	\$60,750	\$39,250	\$100,000
8	2018/19	\$70,000	\$30,000	\$100,000
9	2019/20	\$100,750	\$39,250	\$140,000
10	2020/21	\$90,000		\$90,000
TOTAL		\$838,900	\$461,100	\$1,300,000

Note : Inflation - Costs of playground supply to increase by CPI on costs shown from base year 2011/12

RECOMMENDATION 13

FUTURE REGIONAL PLAYGROUND

*Proposed Anglesea Riverbank Playground
A unique playground for all abilities be provided as part of a larger Anglesea Riverbank Community and Visitor Outdoor Facilities Project in 2011/2012 including play equipment, design, landscape and public art components. This play component of this project is proposed to be staged over 2 years with Stage 1 in 11/12 and Stage 2 in 12/13.*

RECOMMENDATION 14

FUTURE DISTRICT PLAYGROUND

*Proposed Civic / Community Precinct Playground, Torquay
A unique playground for all abilities be provided in 2013/2043 with a minimum budget of \$195,000 (2011 costs) including play equipment, design, landscape and public art components.*

RECOMMENDATION 15

FUTURE LOCAL PLAYGROUNDS

Nineteen local playgrounds have been recommended to be developed over the next 10 years to 2021 at a total cost of \$1,300,000. It is expected that \$836,900 of this would be funded by Council with the remaining cost of \$461,100 to be funded through developer contributions, external grants and external agencies.

RECOMMENDATION 16 (SEE NEXT PAGE)

5 YEAR PRIORITY PLAYGROUND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE BUDGET (2011/12 – 2015/16)
Adopt a 5 Year Priority Playground Capital Expenditure Budget as provided in Table 1 (on page 6)

Table 24: PROPOSED 10 YEAR PLAYGROUND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE SUMMARY (2011/12 - 2020/21)

YEAR	EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	COUNCIL CONTRIBUTION	TOTAL COUNCIL CONTRIBUTION	EXTERNAL FUNDING	TOTAL COST	
1	2011/12	Local Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$77,500	\$258,500		\$308,500
		District Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$81,000			
		New Regional Playground Program Anglesea Riverbank Stage 1	\$100,000			
2	2012/13	Local Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$47,500	\$258,350		\$469,000
		District Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$51,500			
		New Regional Playground Program Anglesea Riverbank Stage 2	\$50,000			
		New Local Playground Program	\$109,350			
3	2013/14	Local Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$53,000	\$322,350		\$473,000
		District Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$35,000			
		New Local Playground Program	\$19,350			
		New District Playground Torquay Civic Community Precinct	\$115,000			
		Local Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$100,000			
4	2014/15	Local Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$37,000	\$310,350		\$381,000
		District Playground (Existing) Upgrade / Extension Program	\$24,000			
		New Local Playground Program	\$159,350			
		Local Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$90,000			
5	2015/16	Playground Upgrade / Extension Contingency	\$30,000	\$404,350		\$545,000
		New Local Playground Program	\$89,350			
		Local Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$90,000			
		District Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$195,000			
		5 Year Sub Total	\$1,553,900	\$1,553,900	\$622,600	\$2,176,500
6	2016/17	Playground Upgrade / Extension Contingency	\$30,000	\$465,000		\$465,000
		New Local Playground Program	\$140,000			
		Local Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$100,000			
		District Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$195,000			
7	2017/18	Playground Upgrade / Extension Contingency	\$30,000	\$475,750		\$515,000
		New Local Playground Program	\$60,750			
		Local Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$190,000			
		District Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$195,000			
8	2018/19	Playground Upgrade / Extension Contingency	\$30,000	\$525,000		\$555,000
		New Local Playground Program	\$70,000			
		Local Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$230,000			
		District Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$195,000			
9	2019/20	Playground Upgrade / Extension Contingency	\$30,000	\$415,750		\$455,000
		New Local Playground Program	\$100,750			
		Local Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$90,000			
		District Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$195,000			
10	2020/21	Playground Upgrade / Extension Contingency	\$30,000	\$210,000		\$210,000
		New Local Playground Program	\$90,000			
		Local Playground Renewal (Replacement) Program	\$90,000			
		Year 6-10 Subtotal	\$2,091,500	\$2,091,500	\$108,500	\$2,200,000
		10 Year TOTAL	\$3,645,400	\$3,645,400	\$731,100	\$4,376,500

Note : 1. The Playground Asset Maintenance is not included in the above costing (Refer Table 15)

2. Inflation - costs of playground supply to increase by CPI on costs shown from base year 2011/12

10.2 External Funding Sources

10.2.1 Developer Contributions and Provision

The Surf Coast Shire *Open Space Strategy* describes several important terms in relation to developer contributions and their relationship to the provision of playgrounds in the Surf Coast Shire.

Developer contributions

The Surf Coast Shire can receive land, a cash contribution (for open space acquisition or development such as a playground), or a combination of land and cash. In other cases, existing open space facilities may be improved through Council capital works programs and initiatives or planning controls for the provision of open space for 'in-fill' residential development.

Recreation and Open Space Fund

Where Council accepts a cash contribution from developers in lieu of land, the contribution may be paid into the Recreation and Open Space Fund to be used (usually within a certain time frame and for a certain purpose) for the development of new or existing open space.

Direct Facility Provision by Developers

Industry open space trends show that developers are realising the 'market' benefits of providing quality open spaces within their developments and are working collaboratively with councils to increase provision. In some cases developers are providing not only land but also paying for the land to be developed into quality spaces. Playgrounds can be directly provided by the developer in this way and used as a selling tool for prospective buyers.

Outline Development Plans

When Outline Development Plans (ODPs) or Local Structure Plans are prepared by Council, it is important that they consider and incorporate the recommendations from the Playground Strategy

10.2.2 Grants

The State Government (through the Department of Planning and Community Development) have recognised the need for developing playgrounds in towns with high visitor numbers and also the need to provide accessible play facilities. Funding support is being provided to Local Governments (and indirectly to Coast Committees such as GORCC where Council applies on their behalf) to build larger play spaces (e.g. Torquay Foreshore Playpark, Anglesea's Coogoorah park Playground, Lorne Foreshore Playground, Moriac All Access Playground, Winchelsea Riverbank Playground).

External funding can be attracted to Regional and District Playgrounds to help offset the costs associated with these playgrounds. It is far less likely to receive external funding from State Government for local playgrounds.

Future playgrounds have been nominated in the Torquay Jan Juc Developer Contributions Plan. This plan provides apportionment costs for playground developments of 78.50% from developers and 21.50% from Council. (These percentages have been used to calculate the 10 year playground budget).

10.2.3 Community Value Adding

A key component in the current planning and delivery of playground developments in the Surf Coast Shire is 'Community Value Adding'.

Working in partnership with the community in the development of new playgrounds has been a cost-effective process achieving positive outcomes for the community and has created a sense of ownership of these facilities. One of the key successes of community value adding has been the integration of community art which has added unique qualities and innovation to a number of projects. Other ways in which the community have 'value added' to a playground project are through spreading of soft fall, staining of timber, tree planting and other landscape works. There have been some instances of cash donations or sponsorship from service clubs and from other organisations towards specific play items. These voluntary contributions from the community enable a larger and more creative playground area to be developed that is reflective of the community in which it is developed.

SECTION 11 BENEFITS MANAGEMENT

Section 2.2 (Benefits of Play) of the Surf Coast Shire Playground Strategy describes the numerous benefits that accrue from play and the importance of play to the everyday lives of children.

Throughout the Playground Strategy, 17 Key Recommendations evolve through the existing playground provision analysis and through a discussion of issues effecting the provision and management of playgrounds.

A *Summary of Recommendations* is provided within *Section 1 (Executive Summary)*.

A rationale or benefit for why each recommendation is important is provided within this *Summary of Recommendations*.

Costs or proposed budget associated with each of these recommendations are also provided within this *Summary of Recommendations*. Implementation of the Playground Strategy will require a significant increase in the current level of Council resources allocated to playground facilities. However, the overall value of playgrounds to Surf Coast Shire communities cannot be underestimated and offers significant justification for an increase in financial resources. A commitment to the playground recommendations is an investment into the future health and wellbeing of Surf Coast Shire communities.

The Surf Coast Shire Playground Strategy (including its 17 Recommendations) has been developed as a result of a thorough play facility assessment methodology, benchmarking with other Councils and also presentation of a draft strategy to the community for comment. The detail provided to support and substantiate each of the 17 Recommendations has enabled conclusions to be drawn that are likely to be of minimal risk of being considered to be disbenefits (i.e. non-financial costs that may be disadvantageous or objectionable to individuals or stakeholder groups that may be impacted by this strategy).

SECTION 12 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

A *Summary of Recommendations* is provided within *Section 1 (Executive Summary)*.

Key Performance Indicators are also provided within this *Summary of Recommendations* and these indicators will be assessed against the proposed timeframe and also in terms of the extent to which each recommendation has been achieved.

Section 14.1 (Monitoring the Strategy) details the importance of ongoing monitoring of the progress of implementation of the strategy recommendations. Basic annual reviews of each of the performance indicators will take place as part of the budget planning, delivery and evaluation process. A thorough 5 Year Review will reassess and revise recommendations and performance indicators if required.

Measures of success or performance against the Playground Strategy recommendations can be complex and hard to quantify. For example, construction of a new play space may be a measure of success in its own right, however a more important consideration may be the level of community benefit that such a facility provides and the extent to which the community have been empowered or engaged through the playground development process.

A variety of measures may be implemented in order to provide additional qualitative and quantitative data to measure performance or success:

Generic Measures

- Specific questions relating to playground provision and development to be included in Council's *Annual Community Survey* in relation to playground satisfaction levels.
- Establish and promote a community feedback/suggestions link on each of the playgrounds listed in the relevant section of the Council's website.
- Establish and promote an on-site communication link via playground or park noticeboards, encouraging community feedback to improve maintenance response time and to identify facility improvement opportunities.
- Establish and promote on-site 'boxes' for storage and collection of feedback or suggestion 'post cards' to more effectively respond to maintenance issues and opportunities for improvement.

Capital Project Monitoring

- Council's Recreation, Youth and Cultural Service Unit should ensure all major playground development projects include a process for assessing levels of community satisfaction and use, pre and post facility development. This could be achieved via distributing a survey to near-by residents and via a feedback box at the playground.
- Further develop project related Playground Planning Group evaluation and feedback surveys so that the playground development process may be continuously improved.

SECTION 13 COMMUNICATION

13.1 Community Engagement

Community engagement is the process of involving a community in decision making about issues which affect their lives.

Community engagement in the design of play spaces is not just a token gesture in seeking community approval for decisions that have already been made. Community engagement invites genuine community participation. Such processes can be challenging, will take time and may be costly. Play space projects are more likely to succeed in meeting community needs and expectations if families and other key stakeholders contribute to the planning, design and even in the construction process.

Engaging with the community through this playground planning process is a *win – win* situation whereby:

- the community appreciate and value opportunities to provide input into the provision of play spaces;
- the end result reflects a better understanding about specific community needs, interests, local context and culture;
- the community develop a sense of ownership and pride in their play space and they are quick to protect it from misuse or vandalism;
- individuals feel empowered that their voice is being heard and that they can make a difference;
- a positive relationship is developed between the community and Council which assists in the process of monitoring, maintaining and improving the play space and also can benefit other community projects; and
- the community are often willing and able to add value to the play space through artwork, planting or other in-kind and cost saving tasks (i.e. spreading of the playground soft fall or applying a stain to the timber).

Community engagement is an essential part of the planning and design process for every new or redeveloped play space. In new residential subdivisions, it is important to engage new residents wherever possible although this is dependent on whether the play space is developed before or after land sales take place. If community engagement is not possible then designs will be directed by and approved by Council staff, using the planning framework and design guidelines provided in this strategy.



Partnering with the local community in Moriac to plant trees around the Newling Playground

Playground Principle 17: Community Engagement

The Surf Coast Shire will engage the community in the planning and design of every new or redeveloped play space.



Community planting day to enhance a Jan Juc playground area...creates a sense of ownership and pride in the community asset.

13.2 Communication of Strategy Principles and Recommendations

A *Summary of Playground Principles* and a *Summary of Recommendations* is provided within *Section 1 (Executive Summary)*. *Recommendation 1* seeks the Surf Coast Shire Council commitment to the application of all of the 23 Playground Principles and also the need to ensure that all playgrounds, including those provided by developers, follow these playground principles.

In accordance with Surf Coast Shire guidelines in promoting new strategies, the Communication Plan for the Playground Strategy will include a media release, website promotion and possibly a strategy launch or promotion at an event such as the Children Services Expo.

SECTION 14 REVIEW

14.1 Monitoring of the Strategy

Monitoring the implementation of the Surf Coast Shire Playground Strategy is essential to determine the success of the playground provision in the Surf Coast Shire. Monitoring should focus on assessing progress towards implementing this Strategy.

This Strategy should become the framework guiding playground development, management and priorities until the plan is fully reviewed and revised, in 5 years time. Basic annual reviews will take place as part of the budget planning process.

14.2 Implementing the Strategy

Currently, planning for new and upgraded playground facilities is led by the Recreation, Youth and Cultural Services Unit of the Sustainable Communities Directorate. Consultation with the Parks and Reserves Unit of the Infrastructure Directorate takes place as part of the planning process.

The Open Space Co-ordinator in the Environment Planning and Emergency Management Unit, is currently responsible for liaising with the Shire's Planning and Development area to ensure that there is appropriate open space provided for future playground developments and also that developers provide the required contributions to new playground facilities or in some cases, deliver new playground facilities according to required guidelines.

The Parks and Reserves Unit are responsible for the maintenance of playground facilities and for working through a strategic program of playground renewal items.

This system appears to be operating effectively.

RECOMMENDATION 17

5 YEAR REVIEW OF THE 10 YEAR PLAYGROUND STRATEGY

A review of the 10 Year Playground Strategy will be undertaken in 2015/16 following implementation of the 5 Year Priority New Playground Works Budget. This review will establish a 5 year program for remaining 5 years of the 10 year strategy.

SECTION 15 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – Population and Demographic Data used for Playground Assessment

The Surf Coast Shire is one of the fastest growing regional municipalities in Victoria which is resulting in significant growth and change.

In 2006, the total population of the municipality was estimated at 22,803. It is expected to increase by over 8,600 people to 31,491 by 2016 (reaching 41,745 by 2031), at an average annual growth rate of 3.28%. This is based on an increase of 3,750 households during the period (2006-2016), with the average number of persons per household falling from 2.57 to 2.49.²³

All areas in Surf Coast Shire are expected to increase in population to 2016, with the Torquay-Jan Juc area dominating population growth, as it has since the 1980's. The population growth in this area has generally been as a result of the area's lack of physical constraints and due to improved access to Geelong (particularly after the duplication of the Surf Coast Highway). Recent developments adding to the well documented 'sea-change phenomenon' are the release of significant land developments with a good supply of affordable land and housing packages and the completion of the Geelong by-pass road which has improved access from Melbourne. Population growth in the Shire has in part also been driven by the increase in occupancy over the last twenty years as holiday houses have been converted to permanent occupancy.

All areas are expected to increase in population to some extent, driven by some residential development, and in the case of the coastal areas, the increase in the number of dwellings occupied permanently. Winchelsea and Moriac are more traditional rural service centres with good access to Geelong (and now Melbourne) and are expected to slowly increase in population as coastal areas become less affordable.

Families

Many young families have been attracted to the Surf Coast Shire due to affordable housing, improved travel times and because of the desire take advantage of the range of lifestyle advantages that the Surf Coast Shire offers over other areas. Torquay and Jan Juc have more of a 'suburban' role in attracting young families, their access to employment in Geelong is a key attribute.

²³ Surf Coast Shire forecast.id profile (2008) and is based on the 2006 Census results

The most significant concentration of couples with children was in rural areas and areas with high proportions of permanent population, including Moriac-Rural East (*refer to Appendix 2 for a description of these grouped population areas in the Census results*), Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach and Winchelsea-Rural West. Torquay North, where there has been significant recent residential development, also has a very high proportion of this household type.

The areas with the lowest proportion included the resort and retirement areas of Anglesea and Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh. The growth areas of Torquay North and Old Torquay-Torquay West are anticipated to have significant increases in the number of couples with children between 2006 and 2021, as a result of in-migration of young families. The proportion of couple families with children is expected to decrease in Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach, Winchelsea-Rural West and Moriac-Rural East as the significant numbers of older families mature over the period, becoming 'empty-nesters'.

Overall in 2006, 47.1% of total families were couple families with child(ren), and 11.9% were one parent families, compared with 43.8% and 15.8% respectively for the Geelong Region.

Young People

An analysis of the age structure of the Surf Coast Shire in 2006, shows that 25.4% of the population were aged between 0 and 17 years. In 2006, children aged 0-14 years formed 20.8% of the total population.

Age Profiles – 0-4 years

The most significant concentration of pre-schoolers in 2006 was in the areas of Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach (353), followed by Torquay North (322) and Old Torquay-Torquay West (231). Anglesea (136) had the lowest share of persons in this age group followed by Winchelsea-Rural West (165), Moriac-Rural East (174) and Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh (184).

Substantial increases in numbers are expected in the main growth areas of Torquay North and Old Torquay-Torquay West to 2021 as a result of the significant residential opportunities; whereas the coastal resort and retirement areas of Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh and Anglesea are expected to decline in numbers. The areas of Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach, Moriac-Rural East and Winchelsea-Rural West experience small growth.

Age Profiles – 5-9 years

The most significant concentration of lower or junior primary-school aged children in 2006 was in the area of Torquay North (335) followed by Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach (333) and Moriac-Rural East (214). Anglesea (112) had the lowest share of persons in this age group followed by Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh (177), Winchelsea-Rural West (197) and Old Torquay-Torquay West (205).

Comparison of number of children in 2006 across age profiles and census areas in the Surf Coast Shire

Source: Surf Coast Shire forecast.id profile (2008)

Census Area	0-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14 yrs	Total 0-14 yrs	Total Pop 2006
Anglesea	136	112	138	386	2408
Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach	353	333	315	1001	4304
Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh	183	177	202	562	2993
Moriac-Rural East	174	214	233	621	2506
Old Torquay-Torquay West	231	205	217	653	3665
Torquay North	322	335	320	977	4274
Winchelsea-Rural West	165	197	201	563	2653
TOTAL	1564	1573	1626	4763	22803

Areas with higher proportions of permanent population tend to have higher proportions of children than resort and retirement areas. Substantial increases are expected in Torquay North, Old Torquay-Torquay West and Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach to 2021 as a result of significant residential opportunities. The areas of Moriac-Rural East, Anglesea and Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh experience minor increases, whereas Winchelsea- Rural West is expected to experience a minor decrease.

Age Profiles 10-14 years

The most significant concentration of upper or senior primary-school aged children in 2006 was in the area of Torquay North (320) followed by Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach (315) and Moriac-Rural East (233). Anglesea (138) had the lowest share of persons in this age group followed by Winchelsea-Rural West (201), Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh (202), and Old Torquay-Torquay West (217).

As with the 5-9 age group, areas with higher proportions of permanent population tend to have higher proportions of children than resort and retirement areas. Substantial increases are expected in Torquay North, Old Torquay-Torquay West and Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach to 2021 as a result of significant residential opportunities. Anglesea is expected to decline in numbers. The areas of Moriac-Rural East, Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh and Winchelsea-Rural West experience small growth.

The statistics and information provided above present a clear picture of the long-term implications for future playground provision.

The following general assessments can be made from this data:

- With significant population growth (including the 'sea-changers' who demand a more diverse quantity and quality of community infrastructure) there will be an increasing demand for better facilities for informal recreation, including improved provision of playground facilities;
- There are currently significant concentrations of children in the 0-4 years, 5-9 and 10-14 years age groups in the areas of Torquay North, Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach and Moriac-Rural East. There are smaller concentrations of children in the 0-4 years, 5-9 and 10-14 years age group in the areas of Old Torquay-Torquay West, Winchelsea-Rural West, Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh and Anglesea; and
- Substantial increases in numbers of children aged 0-4 years, 5-9 and 10-14 years are expected in the main growth areas of Torquay North, Old Torquay-Torquay West and Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach at least until 2021.

A challenge for the future is also in the provision for teenagers who are already the subject of community complaints about them 'loitering' in parks and around shops with 'nothing to do'. The needs of this group need to be carefully planned involving teenagers themselves.

An additional challenge is in the provision of a range of play environments that can accommodate a range of ages or modifying play spaces to allow for increasing skills or challenges as the demographic of an area changes.

Comparison of number of children expected in 2021 across age profiles and census areas in the Surf Coast Shire

Census Area	0-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14 yrs	Total 0-14 yrs	Total Pop 2021
Anglesea	112	118	108	338	2563
Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach	397	399	370	1166	5476
Lorne-Aireys Inlet-Deans Marsh	170	206	225	601	3566
Moriac-Rural East	185	238	264	687	3081
Old Torquay-Torquay West	413	487	487	1387	7145
Torquay North	695	752	709	2156	10150
Winchelsea-Rural West	184	194	204	582	3046
TOTAL	2156	2394	2367	6917	35027

APPENDIX 2 – Definition of Population Areas described in Census results

(reference : Surf Coast Shire forecast.id profile)

CENSUS AREA	DESCRIPTION
Anglesea	Bounded in the north generally by Tanners Rd and Forest Road, in the east by Gundrys Rd, Forest Rd, the Great Ocean Road and Hurst Road, in the south by Bass Strait and in the west generally by the Great Otway National Park.
Jan Juc – Bellbrae – Bells Beach	Bounded in the north by Hendy Main Rd, Ghazeepore Rd, Spring Creek, Duffields Rd and the Great Ocean Road, in the south by Bass Strait and in the west generally by Hurst Road, Great Ocean Road and Forest Rd.
Lorne – Aireys Inlet – Deans Marsh	Includes localities of Aireys Inlet, Bambra, Benwerrin, Big Hill, Surf Coast Shire section of Birregurra, Boonah, Deans Marsh, Eastern View, Fairhaven, Lorne, Moggs Creek and Pennyroyal.
Moriac – Rural East	Includes localities of Barrabool, Buckley, Freshwater Creek, Gnarwarre, Modewarre, Moriac, Mount Moriac and Paraparap.
Old Torquay – Torquay West	Includes part of Torquay with an area bounded by Coombes Rd, Surf Coast Highway and Deep Creek in the north, Bass Strait in the east, Spring Creek, the Great Ocean Road and Duffields Rd in the south and Ghazeepore Rd in the west.
Torquay North	Bounded by Mount Duneed Rd, Lower Duneed Rd and Barwon Heads Rd in the north, Breamlea Rd and Thompsons Creek in the east, Bass Strait, Deep Creek, the Surf Coast Highway and Coombes Rd in the south and Ghazeepore Rd in the west. Includes part of Torquay, part of Breamlea, part of Connewarre and part of Mound Duneed.
Winchelsea – Rural West	Includes the localities of Gherang, the Surf Coast Shire part of Inverleigh, Ombersley, Wensleydale, Winchelsea, Winchelsea South and Wurdiboluc.



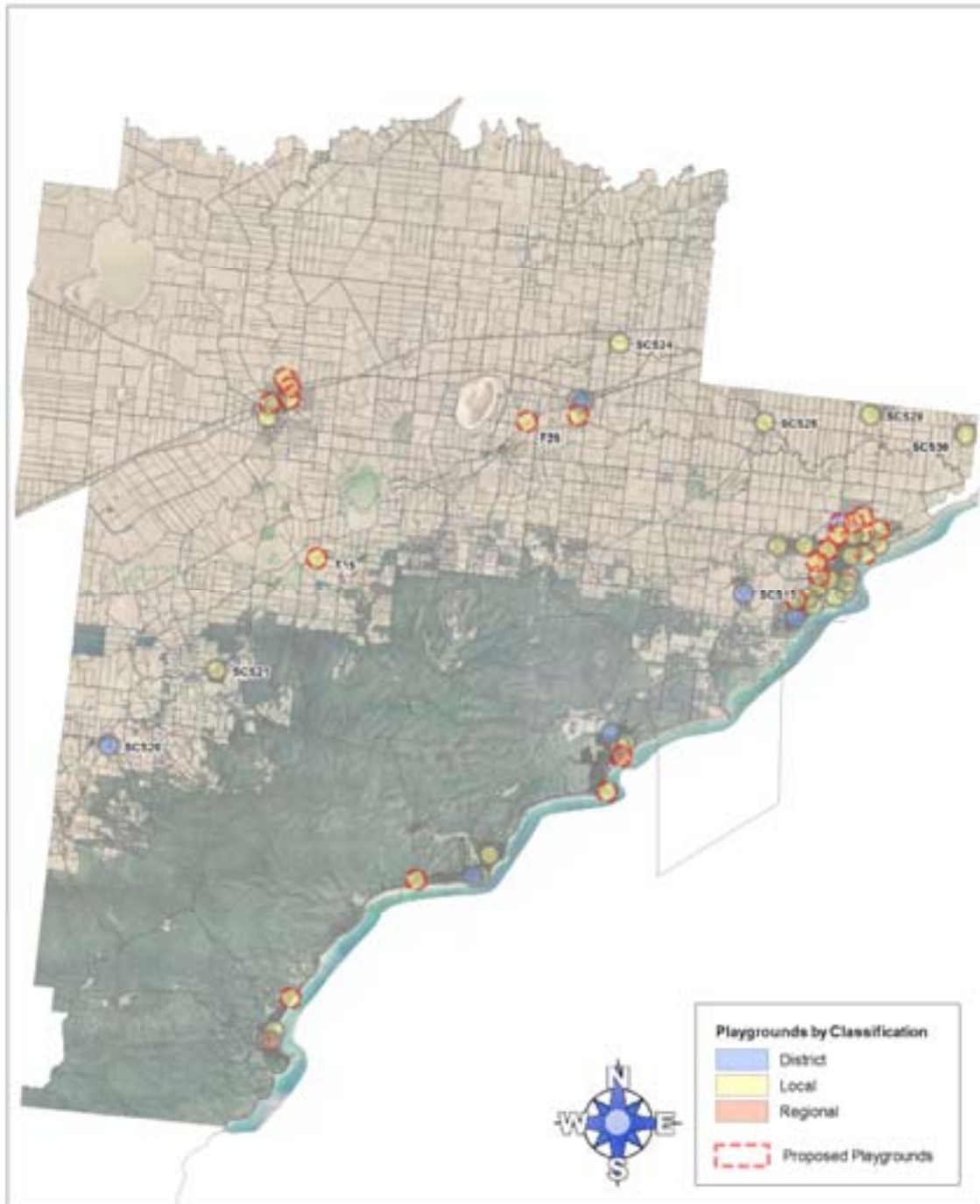
APPENDIX 3 – Spatial Distribution of Existing & Future Playgrounds

The following maps are provided in Appendix 3:

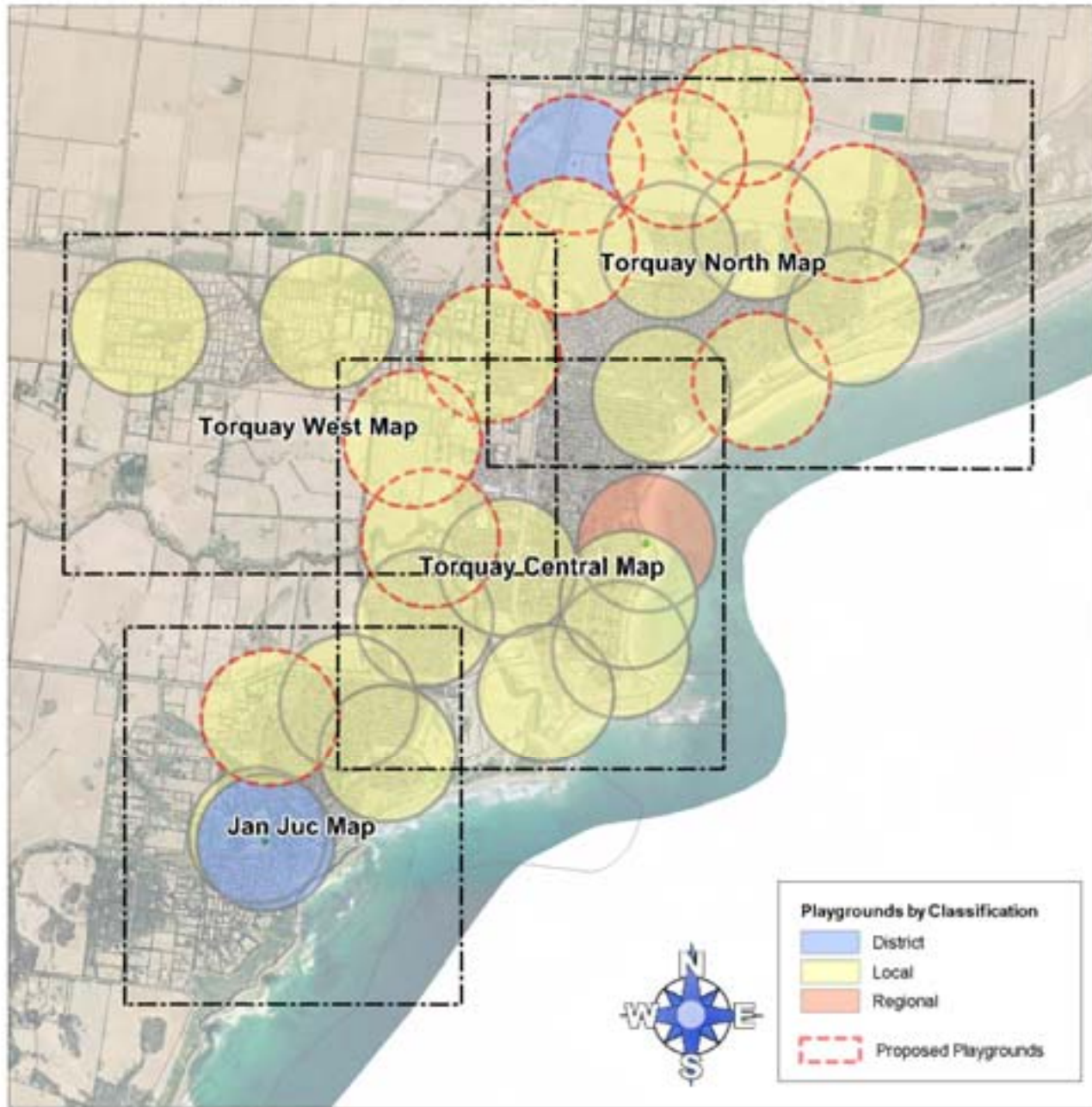
Map 1:	Surf Coast Shire
Map 2:	Torquay / Jan Juc Overview
Map 3:	Torquay Central
Map 4:	Torquay West
Map 5:	Torquay North
Map 6:	Jan Juc
Map 7:	Anglesea
Map 8:	Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven, Moggs Creek
Map 9:	Lorne
Map 10:	Winchelsea
Map 11:	Moriac

Note 1: Circles shown on maps show a 500 meters radius from the playground space.

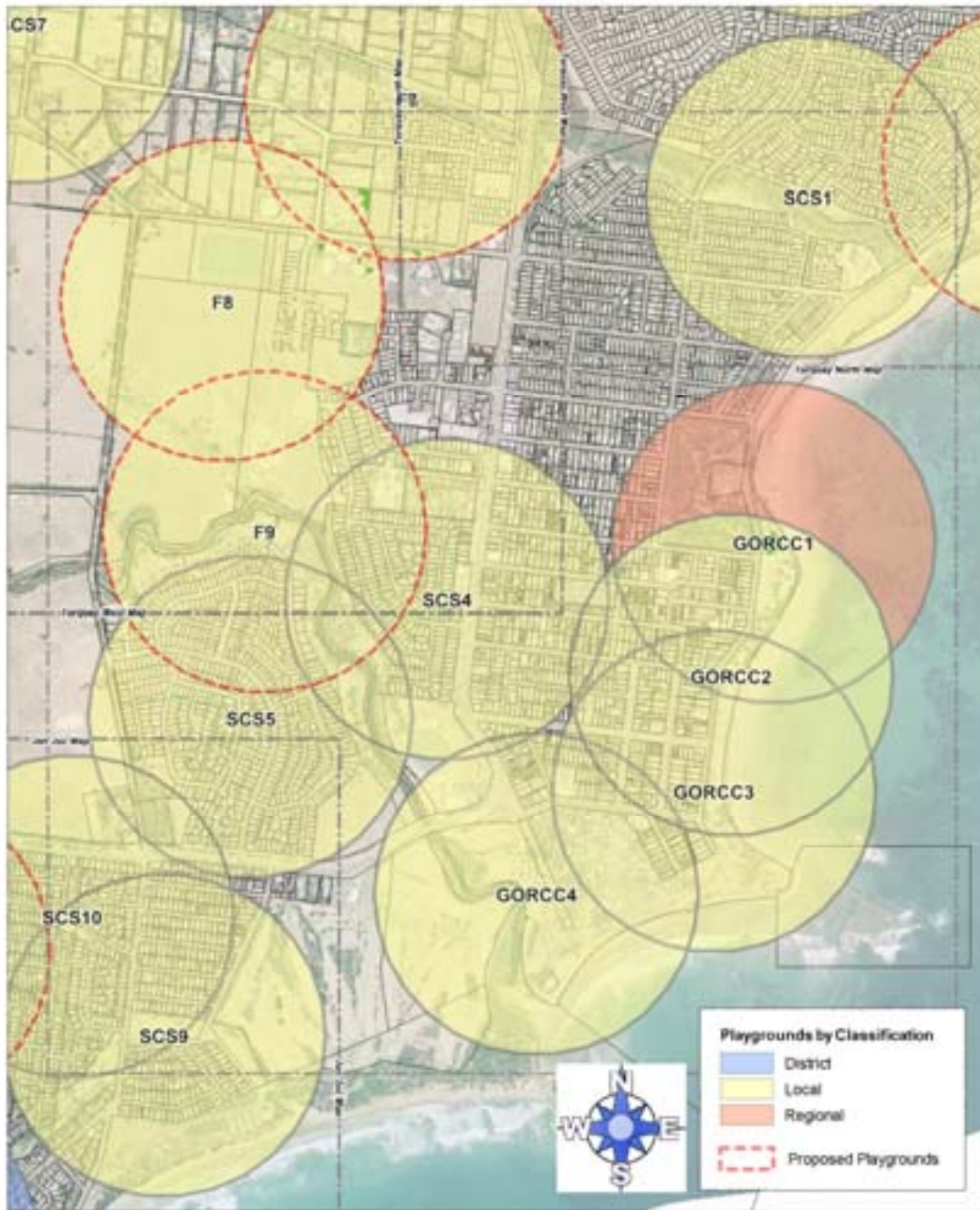
Note 2: A Playground ID has been applied to every existing and future playground. The ID is shown on the map on the location of the playground from which the 500m radius is taken. The Playground ID also correlates to the Playground Renewal Budget table in *Section 10.1.2*, the New Playground Budget table in *Section 10.1.4* and the Playground Register in *Appendix 4*.



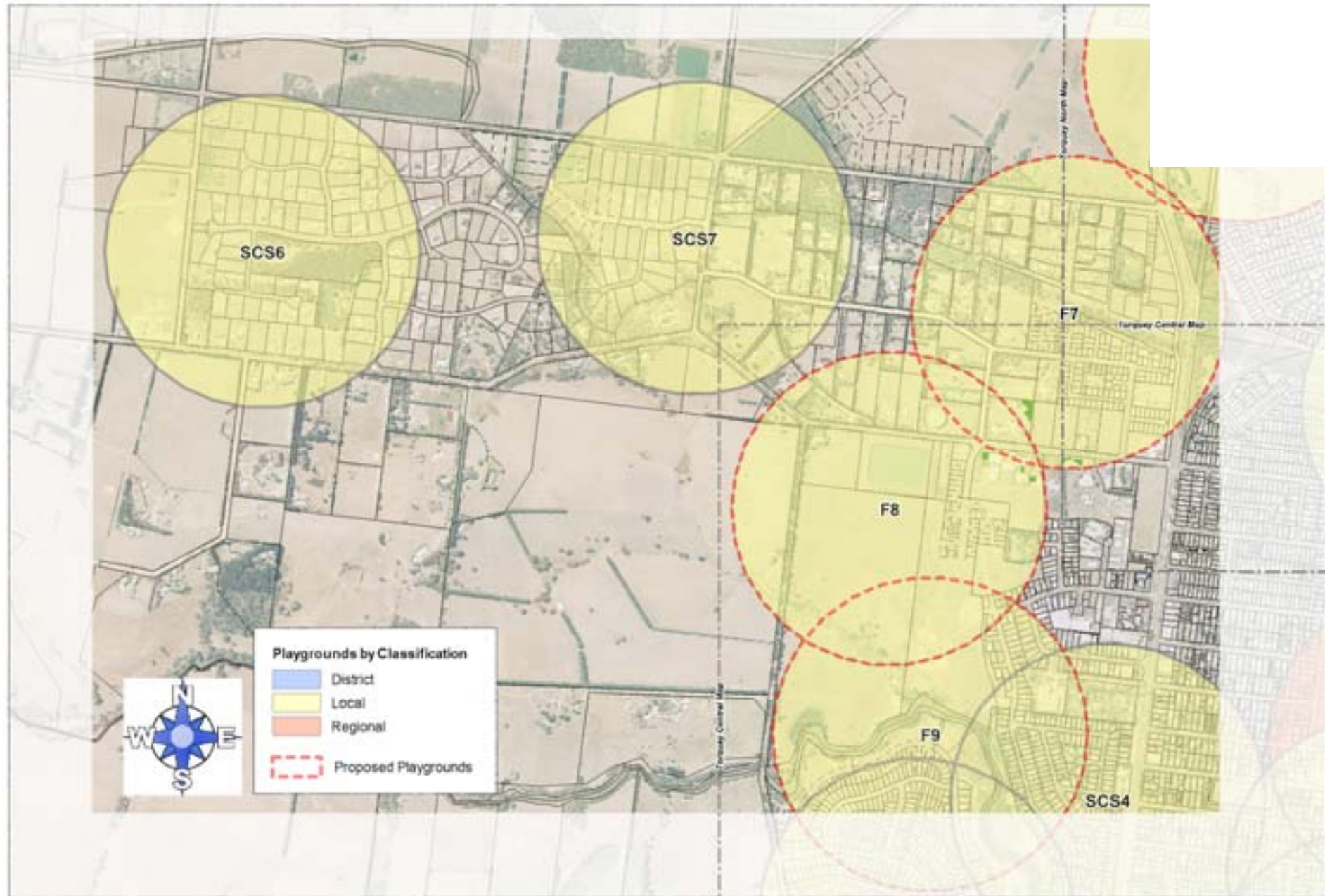
Map 1 : Surf Coast Shire Playground Distribution (existing and future playgrounds)

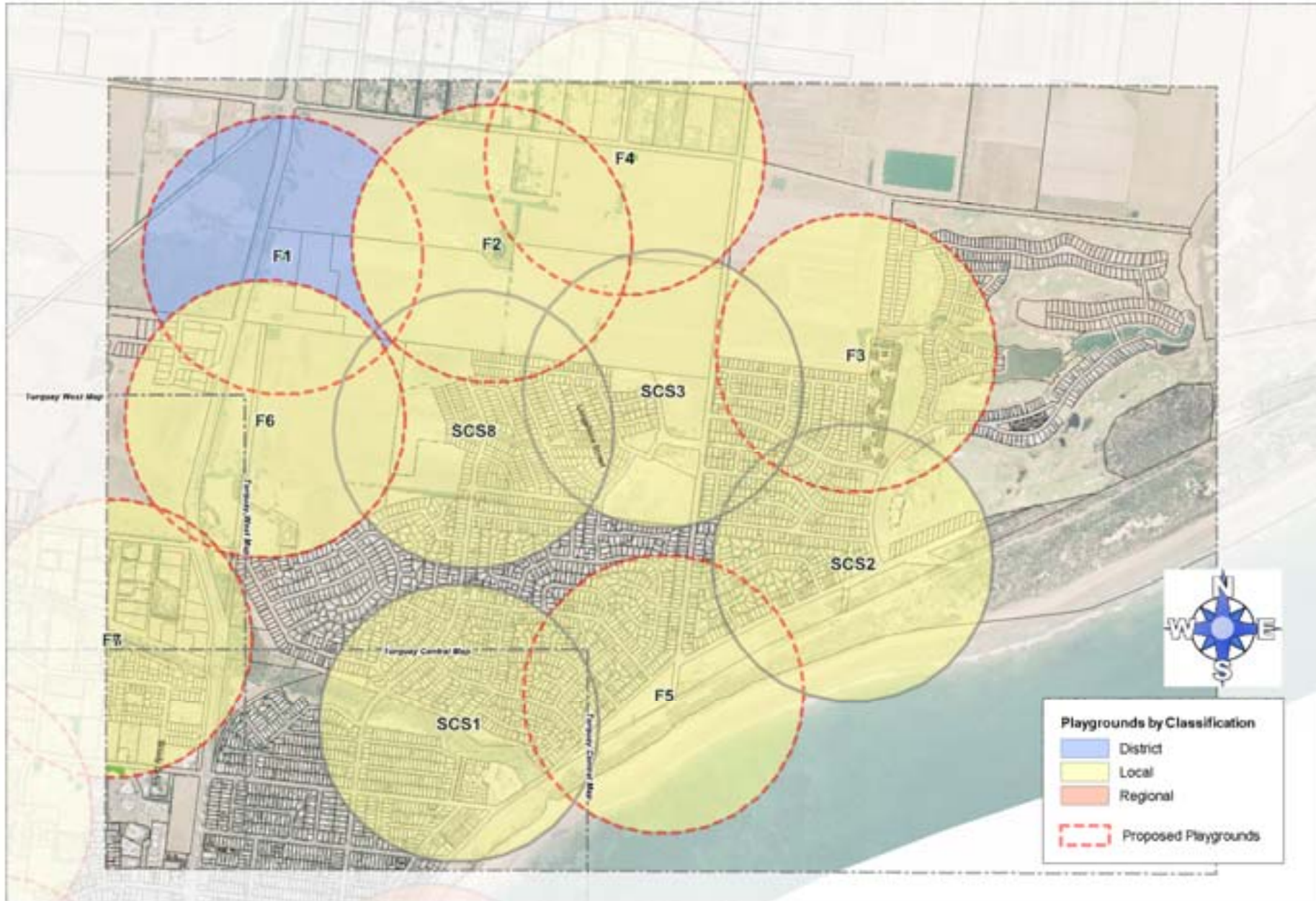


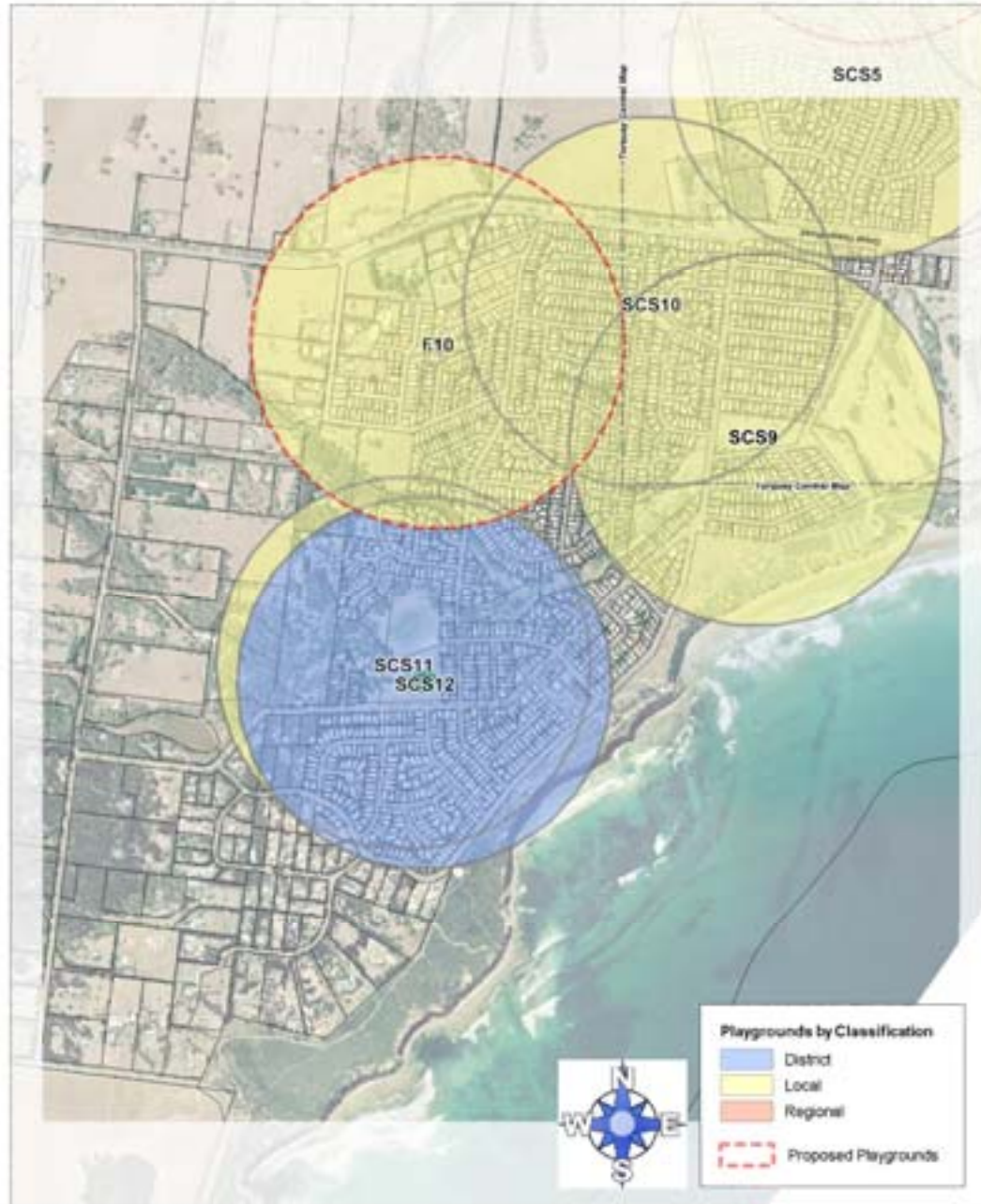
Map 2 : Torquay / Jan Juc Overview



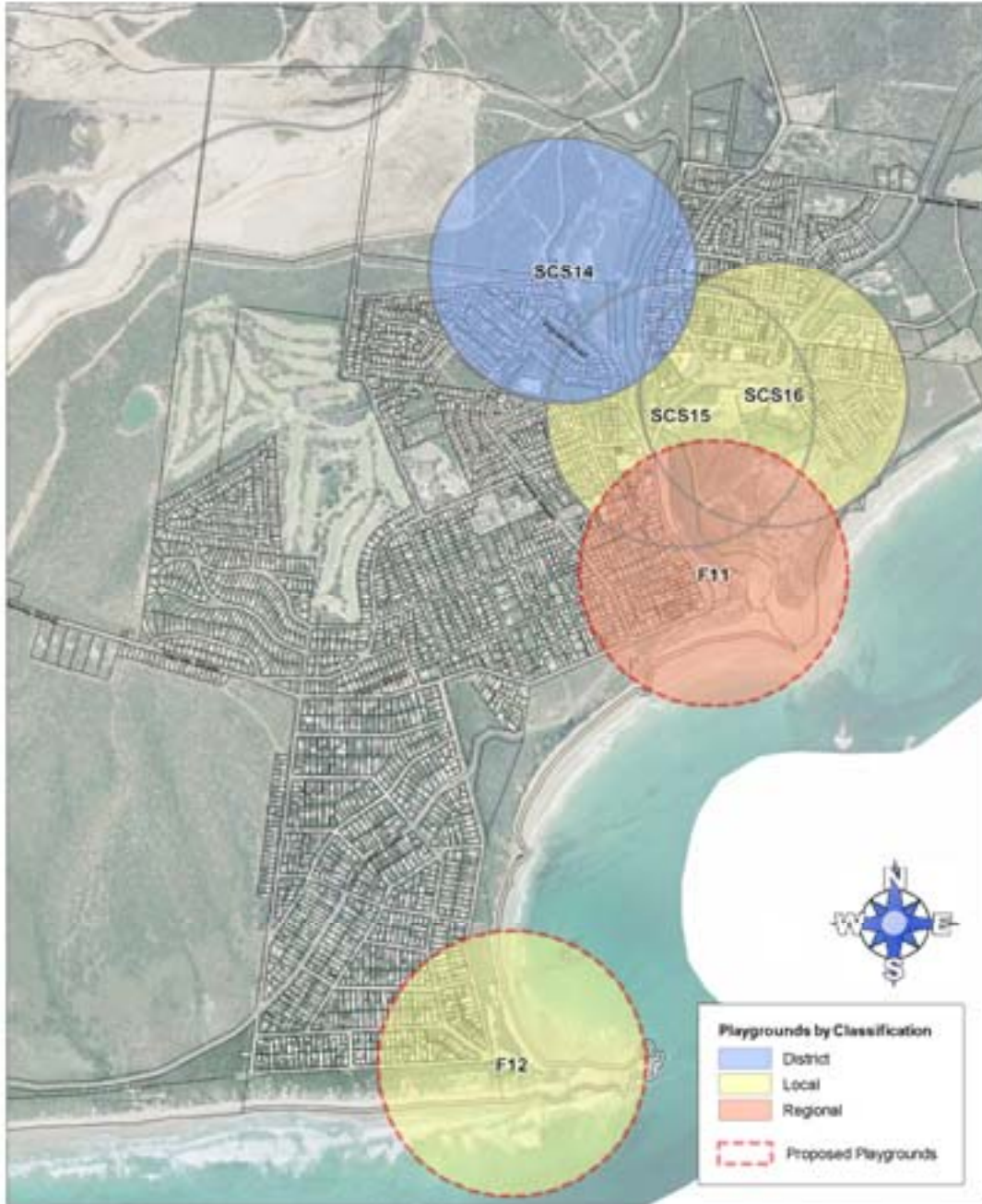
Map 3: Torquay Central





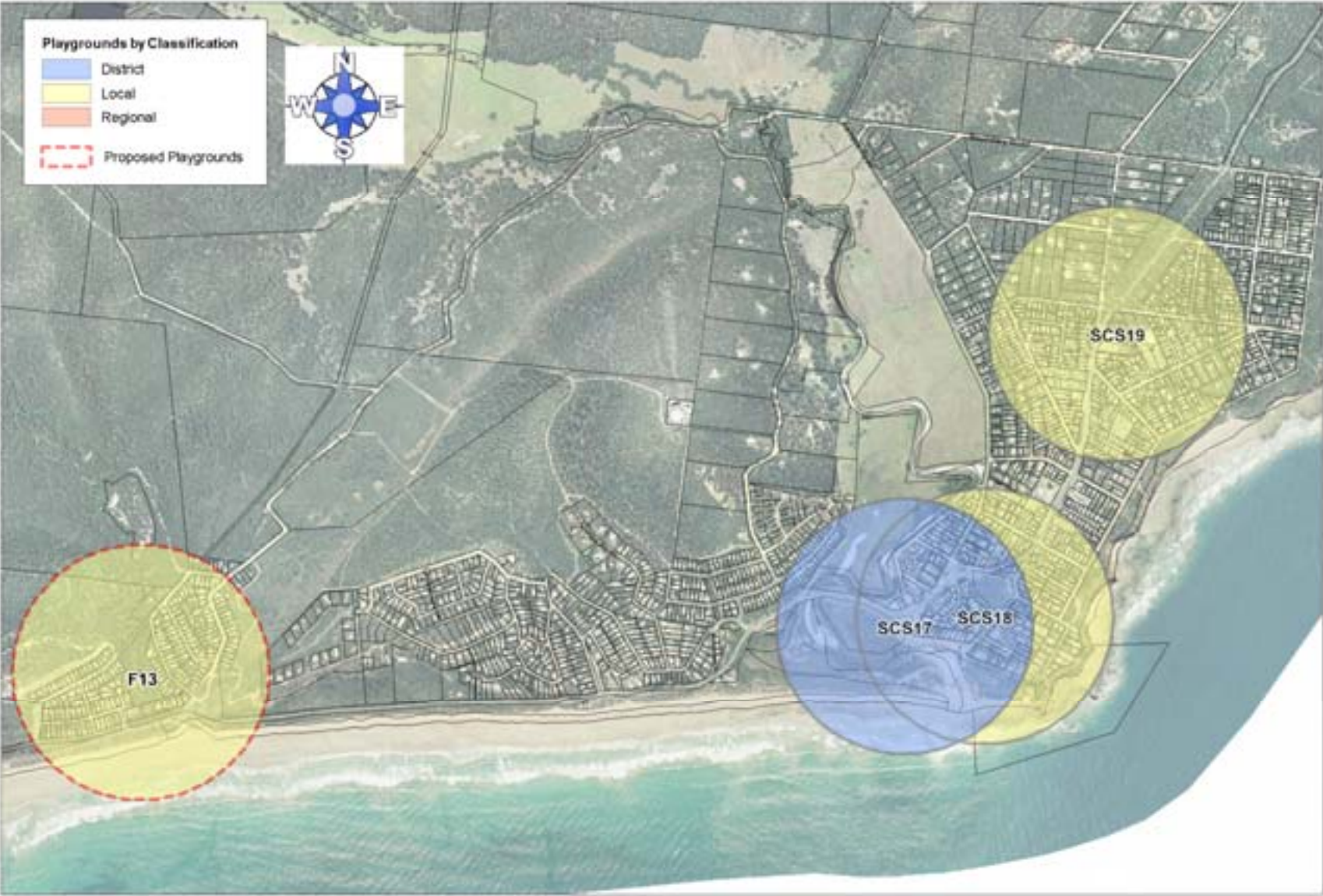


Map 6 : Jan Juc

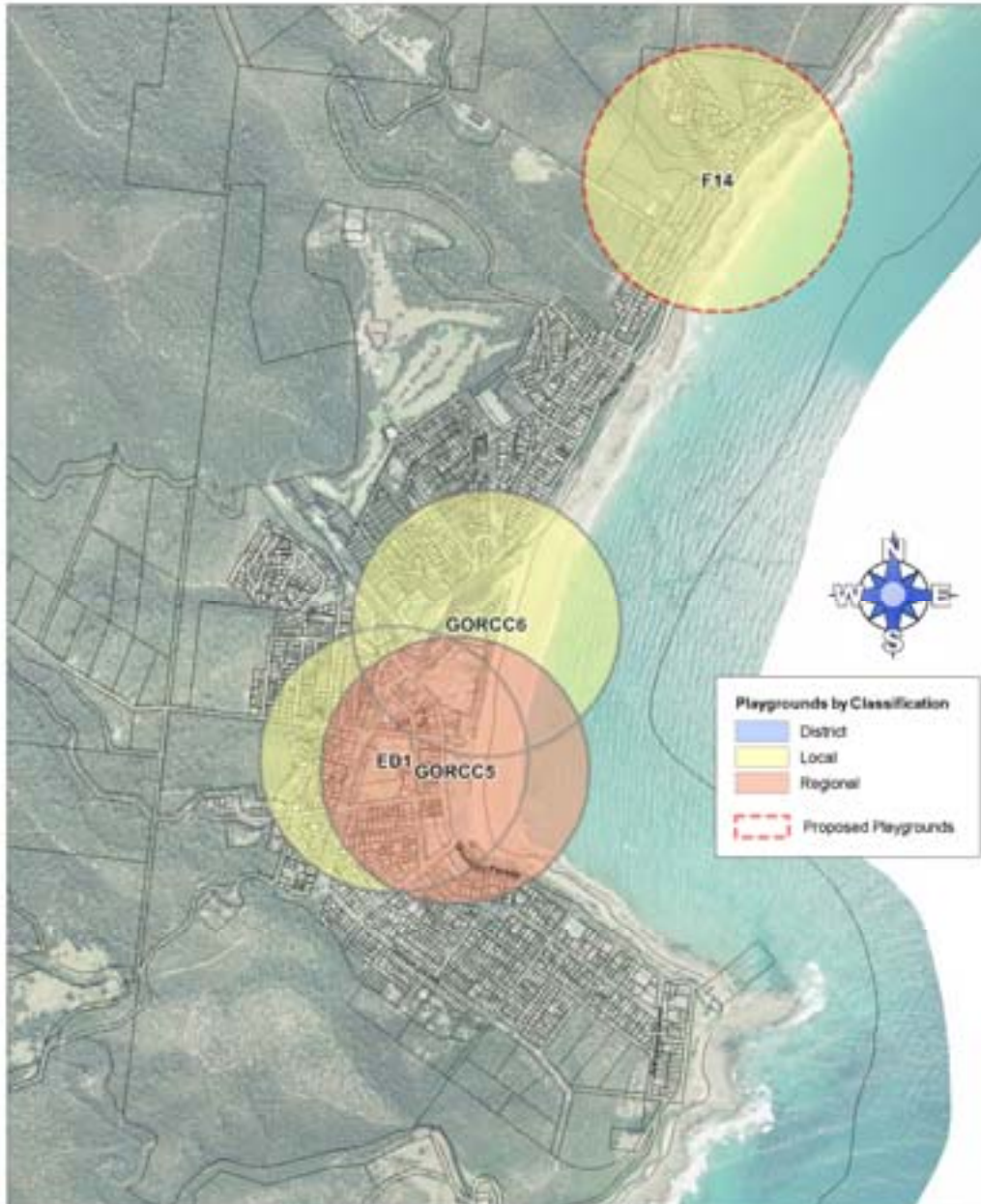


Map 7: Anglesea and Point Roadknight

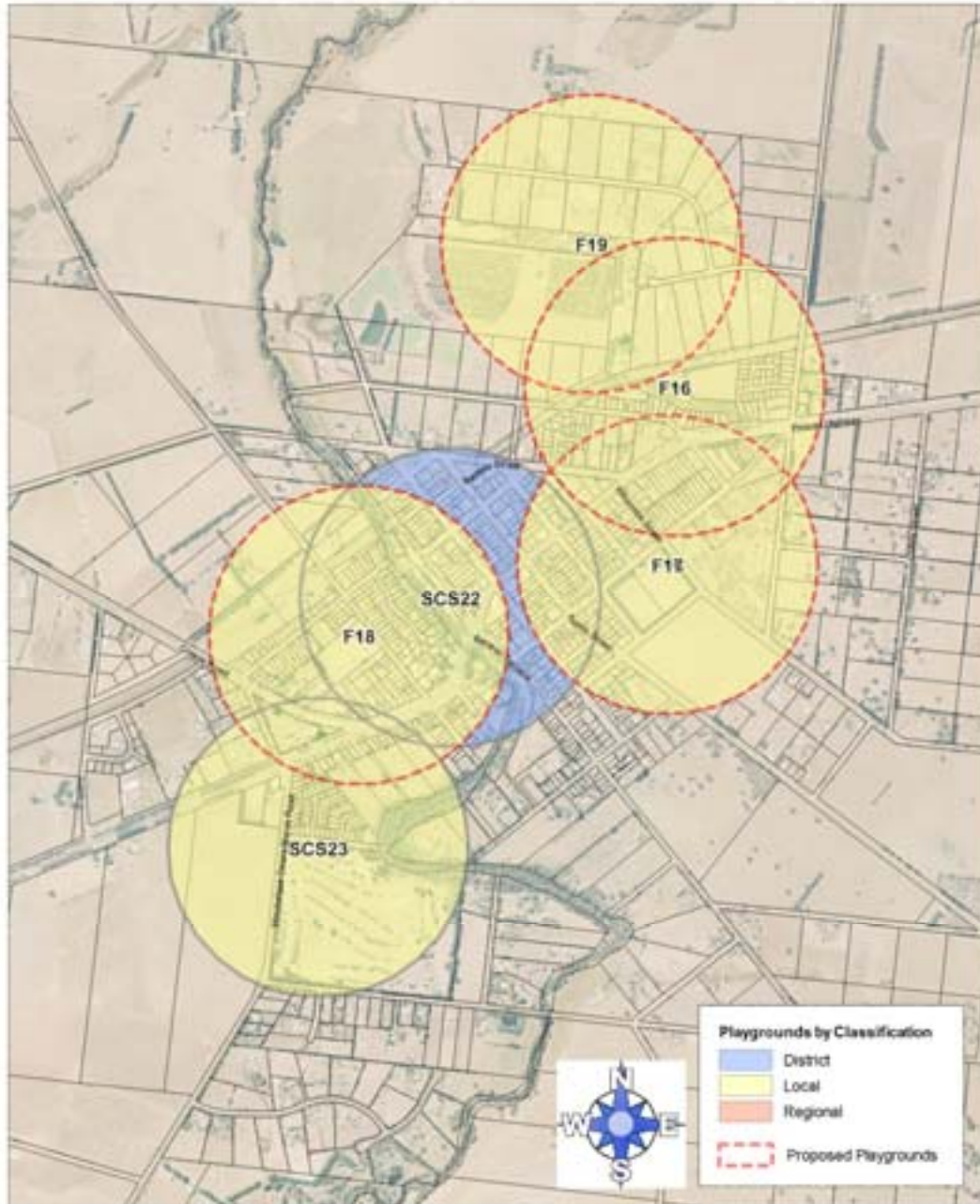
Map 8 : Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven and Moggs Creek



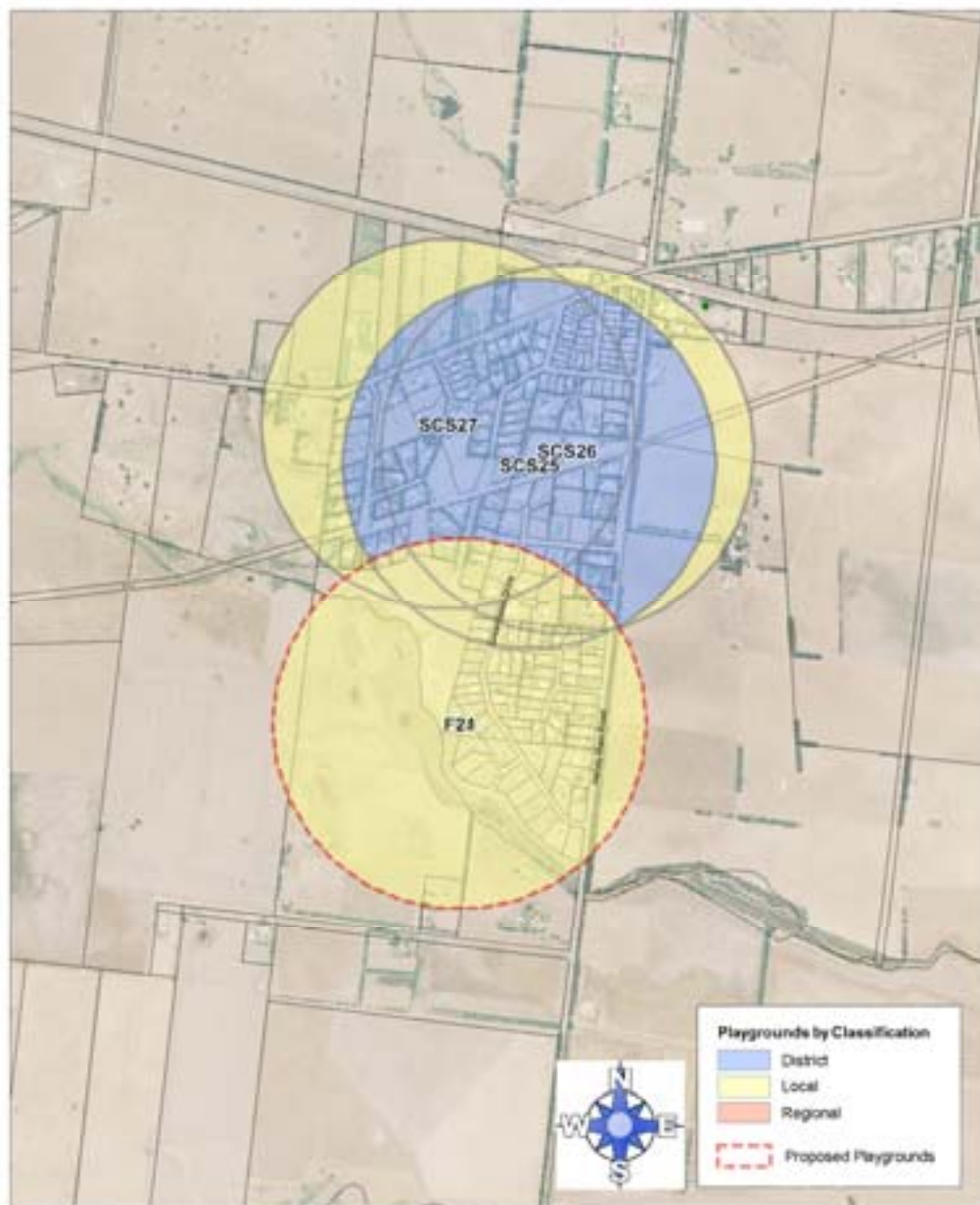
Map 9 : Lorne



Map 10 : Winchelsea



Map 11 : Moriac



APPENDIX 4 – Detail of Existing Playgrounds

Surf Coast Shire Managed Playgrounds

Town	Playground ID	Playground Classification	Location / Playground Name	Address	Age Suitability	Toilets	Accessible Features	Seating	Shelter / Shade	Picnic Table(s)	Drink Fountain	BBQ	Bin	Features	Additional Points of Interest	
Torquay	SCS 1	Local	Deep Creek Reserve Playground	Off Orungal Crt	Toddler / Junior	*	*	✓	*	✓	*	*	*	Combination Unit with slide, wiggle walk, monkey bars, fireman's pole & chain net, honey comb climber. Double swings, Double teeter totter	Next to free public tennis courts Next to Deep Creek Nature Trail	
	SCS 2	Local	St Anne's Reserve Playground	231 The Esplanade	Toddler / Junior	*	*	✓	*	*	*	*	*	Combination unit with slide, climbing wall, shop front, track glide, monkey bars, mushroom steps, steering wheel, Double swings, 2 rockers	Close to beach, Torquay Foreshore Trail and Whites Beach Wetlands	
	SCS 3	Local	The Quay Reserve Playground	Quay Boulevard, Torquay	Toddler / Junior	*	*	✓	*	*	*	*	*	Combination Unit with slides, climbing wall, fireman's pole, monkey bars, climbing net, bridge, shop front, double swing (toddler / junior), 2 x rockers	Adjacent to pathways through The Quay and to Quay Reserve Oval	
	SCS 4	Local	Sarabande Cres Playground	6A Sarabande Cres	Toddler / Junior	*	*	✓	*	✓	*	*	*	Combination unit with slide, monkey bars, tunnel, climbing wall, fireman's pole, bridge, Single horse rocker, double swing (toddler/junior), Community art pieces	Lovely local playground in landscaped setting with pathways through park. Lovely community artwork	
	SCS 5	Local	Great Ocean Views Reserve Playground	Fronts 31 Ocean Views Cres	Toddler / Junior	*	*	✓	*	*	*	*	*	Combination unit with steps, slide, track glide, twisted monkey bars, mushroom steps, honey comb climber, fire man's pole, shop front, double swing set (jnr / toddler), 2 rockers (fish and whale)	Walking path around park Lovely park with "great ocean views" "Seaside" theme with artwork by local resident Jane Bailey	
	SCS 6	Local	Ocean Acres Playground	Sheoak Crt (off Rosedale Dve)	Toddler / Junior	*	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Combination unit with slide, shop front, climb ladder, scramble net, steering wheel, monkey bar loops, track glide, Double swing (toddler / junior), 1 Rocker	Close to nature trails through Ocean Acres Reserve., lovely natural bush setting. Ideal place for a picnic / BBQ Lots of room for kids to run around and explore	
	SCS 7	Local	Frog Hollow Playground	Cnr Messmate Rd and Frog Hollow	Toddler / Junior	*	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	'Infinity' climbing frame, Double swing (toddler and junior), Single rocker, 2 x spinners	A great spot for a picnic. Includes a unique "Infinity Loop Climber".
	SCS 8	Local	The Hill Top Playground	Cnr Fischer St and Nautical Rise	Pre-school - Junior		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Custom designed 'ship / nautical' theme' playground offering a range of play equipment attached to the ship and freestanding items	A lovely park that is well supported by additional infrastructure including half courts area, pathway, shelter	
Jan Juc	SCS 9	Local	Jan Juc Creek Reserve Playground	Carnarvon Ave	Toddler / Junior / Senior	*	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	Junior /Senior combination unit with slide, fireman's pole, ladders, bridge, wheel and shop front. Toddler combination unit with slide, fireman's pole, ladders, steps, wheel and chain climber. Double swing (toddler and junior). Chin up / swing over bar	Suitable for all ages within a great park setting. Adjacent to the Jan Juc Creek Trail on a north facing slope	
	SCS 10	Local	Torquay Blvd Reserve Playground	19 Torquay Blvd (opposite Inveray Ave)	Toddler / Junior	*	*	✓	*	*	*	*	*	Whale Spring Rocker, Double Swing (junior/toddler), 2 Seat Teeter Totter rocker	Playground within open area suitable for informal ball games	
	SCS 11	Local	Bob Pettitt Reserve Pavilion Playground	89 Sunset Strip	Toddler	*	*	✓	✓	*	*	✓	*	Toddler combination unit with 2 slides, honey comb climber, tic tac toe, shop front, speaker x 2, ladder, tunnel, steps, platform, Sandpit with shade sail (to come)	Toilets available only when pavilion is open. Adjacent oval and playing fields. Close to Jan Juc Creek Trail	

Town	Playground ID	Playground Classification	Location / Playground Name	Address	Age Suitability	Toilets	Accessible Features	Seating	Shelter / Shade	Picnic Table(s)	Drink Fountain	BBQ	Bin	Features	Additional Points of Interest
	SCS 12	District	Bob Pettitt Reserve "Coast to Creek" Playground	89 Sunset Strip	Toddler / Junior / Senior	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	Junior / senior combination unit with ramps, steps, monkey bars, sound sculpture, climbing nets, ladders, fireman's pole, slide, climbing wall. Toddler combination unit with slide, cubby, climbing wall, bridge, fireman's pole, corkscrew climber, tunnel, shop front. Double swing (toddler) plus double swing (junior). Sensory Garden. Community ceramics on rocks	Lots for kids and families to do with half court basketball / netball, pathways, BBQ, shelter and picnic facilities. Lovely landscaped setting with beautiful sensory garden to be developed. Community artwork showing "Coast to Creek" theme.
Bellbrae	SCS 13	District	Bellbrae Reserve Playground	Cnr Great Ocean Road and School Rd	Toddler / Junior	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Junior / toddler combination unit with slides, climbing wall, bridge, shop front, steps, monkey bars, counting beads, wheel, jumping jacks, fireman's pole, squeeze bars, Double swing, Sandpit, Double rocker, Single rocker	"Bellbrae Fauna" theme with hand painted artwork by Bellbrae Primary School A fantastic location for a BBQ / picnic with shelter, pathways linking reserve features including a nature trail, wetland area, oval, tennis courts (bookings required) and public toilets.
Anglesea	SCS 14	District	Coogoorah Park Shipwreck Playground	End River Reserve Rd	Toddler / Junior	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	Sunken Inverloch ship with a variety of items attached to ship including slides, climbing nets, climbing wall, tunnels fireman's pole, ladders, treasure map with treasure chest, shark fins, clatter bridge, Double swing, 1 digger, 1 rocker	"Inverloch Shipwreck" theme complete with treasure map, hidden treasure, crow's nest, shark fins. Picturesque park within Anglesea River environment. Great for a day full of fun with picnic/ BBQ, nature trails, family bike trails, fishing or BYO canoe.
			Coogoorah Park Pre-school Playground	End River Reserve Rd	Toddler	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	Combination unit with two slides, counting beads, steps, ladders, wheel, binoculars
	SCS 15	Local	Lions Park Playground	Great Ocean Road	Toddler / Junior	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	Redevelopment 2010 providing a range of unique freestanding pieces for all ages with a fairyland theme.	Next to Skatepark. Close to Anglesea River with shared pathways, paddleboats, fishing. Close to Anglesea Shopping Centre
	SCS 16	Local	Tennis Club Playground	19 Cameron Rd	Toddler	*	*	*	✓	*	*	*	*	Slide unit, Digger	In an enclosed area next to Anglesea Tennis Courts
Aireys Inlet	SCS 17	District	Aireys Inlet Reserve Playground	Cnr Great Ocean Rd and Inlet Cres	Toddler / Junior	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Combination unit with commando bridge, double wave slide, steps, honeycomb climber, lookout platform, track glide, twist monkey bars, mushroom steps, steering wheel. Double swing with junior and toddler seat, 1 whale rocker and 1 fish rocker	Picturesque location on Painkalac Creek with views to the lighthouse Ideal for a picnic/ BBQ and adjacent to the Aireys Inlet Skatepark with lots of room also for a game of cricket or kick of the footy. Great artwork features involving Aireys Inlet Primary School
	SCS 18	Local	Bark Hut Reserve Playground	10 Inlet Crt	Toddler / Junior	*	*	✓	✓	✓	*	*	✓	Combination unit with monkey bar, talking tubes, slide, spider net, climbing net, fireman's pole, shop front, steps, tunnel, squeeze bars and bridge, 2 x rockers, Double swing (toddler / junior)	Includes artwork by local artist Susan Romyn Next to the historic "Bark Hut" replica and located next to Allen Noble Sanctuary
	SCS 19	Local	Aireys Inlet Community Centre Playground	6-6A Great Ocean Rd, near cnr Aireys St	Toddler	*	✓	*	✓	*	*	✓	✓	Junior combination unit with platforms, bridge, slide, tunnel, wheel, ladders, Sandpit, cubby house, activities within rubberized surface around edge of playground	Next to Aireys Inlet Community Centre in enclosed yard.
Deans Marsh	SCS 20	District	Deans Marsh Memorial Park Playground	Cnr Deans Marsh Lorne Rd and Pennyroyal Valley Rd	Toddler / Junior	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	Double swing, Junior and toddler combination unit with slides, climbing wall, ladders, bridge, firemans pole, car, Track glide, Spinner' Monkey bars' Sand pit' Sound sculpture	"Rustic" theme capturing this rural town's appreciation of nature and culture. Great place for a family picnic / BBQ with adjacent skatepark, BMX track, oval and tennis courts.
Bambra	SCS 21	Local	Bambra Hall Playground	Deans Marsh Lorne Rd / Bambra AI Rd	Toddler / Junior	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	*	✓	Double swing with junior and toddler seat, sand pit	Lovely setting next to Bambra Hall and tennis courts

Town	Playground ID	Playground Classification	Location / Playground Name	Address	Age Suitability	Toilets	Accessible Features	Seating	Shelter / Shade	Picnic Table(s)	Drink Fountain	BBQ	Bin	Features	Additional Points of Interest
Winchelsea	SCS 22	District	Riverbank Reserve Playground	Barwon Terrace	Toddler / Junior	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	1 x Double junior swing, 1 x Double toddler swing, 1 x Spring Platypus Rocker, 1 x Fish/Rabbit Seesaw, 1 x Sandpit & 2 Diggers, 1 x Custom made combination unit with slides, bridge, ramp, firemans pole, rope climber, monkey bars	A picturesque setting on the banks of the Barwon River. Delightful "Ingleby" woolshed theme involved artist Veronica Phillips. Complemented by picnic and BBQ facilities and Barwon River Trail and Winchelsea Swimming Pool.
	SCS 23	Local	Dwyer Street Playground	Dwyer St	Toddler / Junior	*	*	✓	*	✓	*	*	*	Combination unit with steps slide and fireman's pole, double swing (jnr and toddler), 2 x spring rockers	Next to Winchelsea Golf Course
Mount Moriac	SCS 24	Local	Mt Moriac Rec Reserve Playground	Reservoir Rd	Toddler / Junior	✓	*	✓	*	*	*	*	*	Combination unit with slide and ladder, 1 horse rocker, 1 double swing with toddler and junior	Next to netball and tennis courts and ovals within the Mt Moriac Recreation Reserve
Moriac	SCS 25	District	Newling Reserve	830 HendyMain Rd	Toddler / Junior / Senior	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Senior / Junior section with trak glide, pommel walk, monkey bars, firemans pole, spider net, climbing wall, double slide, shop front and squeeze bars and bridge to Toddler section with steps, climbing wall, tunnel, slide, tic tac toe Rubber all access surface with shop front, clock face, wheel, talking tubes, path to swings, 2 x double swings (1 toddler and 1 junior), 1 rocker, timber animals (slug and lizard) artwork in path	Accessible multi-age playground with "Rural" theme, community art creations and timber sculptures and next to BMX track, skatepark and picnic / BBQ shelter. Also situated on the Newling Reserve pathway so is a great place for kids to ride, run, skate and play.
	SCS 26	Local	Moriac Community Centre	830 HendyMain Rd	Toddler	✓	*	✓	✓	*	*	*	*	Toddler combination unit with slide, steering wheel, climber, Double swing, 1 x rocker, 1 x sandpit area	In enclosed area next to tennis courts and Moriac Community Centre
	SCS 27	Local	Clerke Crt Playground	Clerke Crt (behind Pre-school)	Toddler / Junior	*	*	✓	✓	✓	*	*	✓	Double rocker, Combination unit with tunnels and slides, Double swing	Shady location next to Newling Reserve pathway with its lovely timber sculptures. Close to Moriac -school
Freshwater Creek	SCS 28	Local	Freshwater Creek Reserve	Dickins Rd	Toddler / Junior	*	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	Double swing (toddler and junior seat) and horse rocker	Quiet, picturesque location on the banks of Freshwater Creek. Ideal for a picnic / BBQ. Adjacent free tennis courts
Mount Duneed	SCS 29	Local	Kalkarra Reserve	Kalkarra Crescent	Toddler / Junior	*	*	✓	✓	✓	*	*	✓	1 x double swing (toddler and junior), 1 x slide with platform, 1 x spring rocker, Relocated junior combination unit (from Bellbrae) with new decks, tunnel, slide, corkscrew climber, scramble climber, wheel, abacus, and 2 x rockers	Great for all of the family with adjacent BMX track, walking trail and plenty of room to kick the footy or fly a kite
Connewarre	SCS 30	Local	Connewarre Reserve	Cnr Bluestone School Rd and Randles Rd	Toddler / Junior	*	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	1 x 2-way rocker 1 x wave slide 1 x seagull swing	Quiet place for a family picnic/ BBQ with lots of other activities including BMX track, tennis court, basket ball court and oval.

Playgrounds managed by others

Town	Playground ID	Playground Classification	Location / Playground Name	Address	Age Suitability	Toilets	Accessible Features	Seating	Shelter / Shade	Picnic Table(s)	Drink Fountain	BBQ	Bin	Features	Additional Points of Interest
Great Ocean Road Coast Committee Playgrounds	GOR CC 1	Regional	Torquay Foreshore	Elephant Walk, The Esplanade, opposite Zeally Bay Rd	Toddler / Junior / Senior	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	Custom designed playground with ramps, bridges, steps, monkey bars, ladders, long slides, climbing nets, firemans pole, rockers, diggers. 3 x double swings for toddlers and juniors. Liberty Swing.	A lovely natural "Sea themed" playground overlooking Fisherman's Beach. Great climbing trees and picnic facilities
	GOR CC 2	Local	Torquay Front Beach	The Esplanade,	Toddler / Junior	✓	*	✓	*	✓	*	*	✓	Double swing (toddler / junior) Junior monkey bar	Beautiful beach views
	GOR CC 3	Local	Cosy Corner	The Esplanade, Cosy Corner	Toddler / Junior	✓	*	✓	*	✓	*	✓	✓	Small combination unit with slide, chain climber, fireman's pole, ladder. Double swing (junior seats)	Beautiful beach views
	GOR CC 4	Local	Spring Creek	Surf Beach Rd, near Torquay Surf Club	Toddler / Junior	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	Small combination unit with slide, ladder, rung climber and shop front, 1 rocker. Plus small combination unit with slide ladder and fireman's pole nearby	Lovely setting beside creek. Lovely pathways. Opposite creek is Torquay Golf Course.
	GOR CC 5	Regional	Lorne Foreshore	Mountjoy Pde, near cnr Grove Rd	Toddler / Junior / Senior	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	Custom designed themed playground using old Lorne Pier and Coata boat – using old pier pylons and depth markers. Ramps up to slides, fireman's poles, climbing ropes, ladders, coata boat up on deck. 3 double swings (2 x junior and 1 x jnr/toddler), 2 x rockers, 1 x monkey bar	Great location next to Lorne beach, trampolines, skatepark and close to the shops. Kids love running up the ramps and playing under the pier.
	GOR CC 6	Local	Lorne Erskine Paddock	Cypress Ave near Swing Bridge	Toddler / Junior	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	*	✓	Combination unit with slides, rung climber, clatter bridge, tic tac toe, shop front, ladder, climbing wall. Double swing with toddler and junior seat	Lovely shady spot near the Erskine River swing bridge. Circular bike track near by- great for learning to ride a bike.
School Playgrounds	ED 1	Local	Lorne P-12 College	Grove Rd / Stribling Reserve	Junior	*	*	✓	*	*	*	*	*	Combination Unit with slide bars, ladders, slides, climbing walls, bridges, pommel climb, monkey bars, trak glide, barrel roll, tic tac toe, chain climber, firemans pole	Community use is permitted for users and visitors to Stribling Reserve (part of playground is built on Council land TBC?)
		N/A	Torquay P-9 College	Grossmans Rd	Junior										Community access is not permitted.
		N/A	St Therese PS	Grossmans Rd	Junior										Community access is not permitted.
		N/A	Bellbrae PS	School, Rd	Junior										Community access is not permitted.
		N/A	Anglesea PS	Camp Rd	Junior										Community access is not permitted.
		N/A	Aireys Inlet PS	Anderson St	Junior										Community access is not permitted.
		N/A	Deans Marsh	PennyRoyal Valley Rd	Junior										Community access is not permitted.
		N/A	Winchelsea PS	Princes Hwy	Junior										Community access is not permitted.
	N/A	Moriac PS	HendyMain Rd	Junior										Community access is not permitted.	

APPENDIX 5 – List of References and Background Documents

Cavanagh, Margaret “The need to play: creating special places for play”, Playground Advisory Unit, Kidsafe NSW Inc. (2003)

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Migas, Lynnel ‘Play by the Rules’, PlayRight Australia Pty Ltd (2003)

As a benchmarking exercise, a number of playground strategies were reviewed including:

Palmerston City Council *Playground Strategy Final Report* Feb 2005 (SGL Consulting Group)

Shire of Murrindindi *Recreation, Reserves and Play Strategy 2003: Volume 2 Overview of Playground Proposals & Strategy* by @leisure

Maribyrnong City Council *Play Strategy 2008-13*

City of Burnside *Playground Strategy* August 2007

Various Council documents have been used as background documents for the development of this strategy:

Council Plan, 2009 - 2013

Community Plan “*Your Visions*” 2004

Open Space Strategy 2004

Draft Surf Coast Shire Recreation Strategy 2009

Community Access & Inclusion Plan 2009-2013

Municipal Early Years Plan June 2006

Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2009 – 2013

Tourism Strategic Plan 2006

Draft Surf Coast Shire Arts and Culture Strategy 2009-2013

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