

2016-
2026



Weipa Playground Management Plan

Weipa Town Authority

1 Hibberd Drive, Weipa
PO Box 420, WEIPA QLD 4874 T 07 4030 9400
www.weipatownauthority.com.au
ABN: 54 137 266 285

Prepared by WTA Communities Department



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INTRODUCTION

The Weipa Playground Management Plan 2016 sets out a long term plan to achieve a network of play spaces that meets the current and future recreational needs of Weipa over the next 10 years. The Plan aims to provide a sustainable approach to balancing what is needed with what is manageable and affordable.

METHODOLOGY

This plan involved assessing the quality and quantity of play spaces within Weipa against best practice play provision, gaining an accurate picture of the current level of provision and engaging with existing users of the facilities to ensure recommendations for the future reflect community needs.

Specific actions associated with the preparation of this management plan were:

- Completing an analysis of literature, plans and reports relevant to the management of play spaces in Weipa;
- Conducting a comprehensive audit of all existing play spaces against Australian Standards to ensure safety standards are met and to identify short and medium term work priorities for budgeting purposes;
- Conducting a community survey and stakeholder discussions to gauge community satisfaction and needs;
- Developing a set of guiding principles for the creation and development of play spaces in the future;
- Establishing a clear hierarchical framework from which to operate and guide decisions;
- Engaging with internal staff to ensure initiatives are sustainable and able to be well integrated across the organisation and;
- Developing a five year action plan to improve and develop play spaces in Weipa.

SCOPE

Play spaces can include a range of different types of places, both in and outdoors however, for the purposes of this Plan, play spaces refer to those managed by the Weipa Town Authority (WTA) that are:

- Areas of open space containing playground equipment;
- Areas of sports reserves containing playground equipment and;
- Weipa Skate Park.

Open space areas such as green belts, beach foreshores and bushland, although often used for recreation have not been included. School, Kindergarten and Childcare Centre facilities have also been excluded as these are generally not accessible to the broader community.

VISION

‘To enable all residents of Weipa to access a wide range of recreation opportunities, which contribute to their wellbeing’. Taken from the Weipa Community Plan 2012-2022

KEY PRINCIPLES

Quality play spaces contribute to the culture and livability of our neighborhoods, which in turn improve the mental, social and physical wellbeing of both adults and children. WTA have identified 10 key principles as part of this Management Plan to guide decision making regarding future play space developments. These principles will be applied in upgrading current play spaces and in the future for the design of new play spaces.

Accessibility and Connectivity

WTA will ensure that residents have safe and convenient access to playgrounds by way of walking, cycling or driving in accordance with the hierarchy of open space.

Aesthetic

WTA will give consideration to the visual amenity of play spaces to present an attractive and appealing environment so that both children and carers have an enjoyable experience.

Community Involvement

WTA will encourage the involvement of the community in the discussion, prioritising and decision making processes regarding the future directions for play spaces within the town.

Diversity

WTA will provide a diverse range of play opportunities by creating variety in: landscape and settings, the ages and abilities catered for, the integration of public art and the installation of unique equipment and features.

Equity

WTA will provide an equitable distribution of play spaces throughout the town catering for the needs of the community and providing reasonable proximity to all residents in accordance with the Open Space hierarchy.

Hierarchy of Play spaces

WTA will provide a level of supporting infrastructure and amenities consistent with the hierarchy of playgrounds and any other open space guidelines.

Quality

WTA will provide quality play equipment and settings that facilitate interesting and stimulating play experiences to meet the physical, sensory, emotional, social and cognitive needs of children and their families.

Safe Play Environment

WTA will develop, manage and maintain play spaces to a safe standard in accordance with accepted industry standards and specifications.

Sun Safety

WTA will seek to create safer environments through the provision of shade in play spaces utilising appropriate landscaping and tree selection in conjunction with the use of built structures and shade sails.

Sustainability

The level of play space provision will be sustainable within the town and can be effectively maintained within WTA's resourcing and management capabilities.

PLAY IN CONTEXT

PLAY SPACES

There is a growing momentum around Australia to broaden our understanding of the traditional play space concept to match our understanding of what constitutes play and what are the benefits of play. For this reason the term 'play spaces' is suggested as it refers to the entire site where play opportunities are available rather than just the traditional playground equipment. It includes the landscaping features such as rocks, drains, gardens, paths, seating, lighting, art and open space that can be utilized for play as well as the traditional playground equipment.

WHAT IS PLAY?

The Good Play Space Guide: "I can play too" published by the Department for Victorian Communities in March 2007 describes play as active, spontaneous, free, self-generating, fun, exploratory and intrinsically motivated.

Play can be categorized as:

- physical or active – involving movement and basic motor skill like running, climbing, rocking;
- cognitive – using imagination, problem solving skills and sensory experiences; or
- social – involving interactive play, dramatic play with other children.

BENEFITS OF PLAY

Play is important to children. When they play, they are not wasting time they are learning about and interpreting the world around them. It is through various aspects of play that children develop life skills such as problem solving, independence, flexibility and the ability to deal with change, creativity, spatial knowledge and self-awareness.

Local governments provide play spaces because the community values the benefits which come from play and recreation and also because we have a duty under Article 31 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, ratified by Australia in 1990. In accordance with this convention, the Australian

government has a duty to provide opportunities for recreational play and leisure for children and this role is undertaken by local government.

TRENDS IN PLAY SPACES

Play spaces are continually evolving to meet the changing expectations of the community. Based on a review of literature, other local government play space strategies and an article by Klingensmith, the trends currently impacting play spaces are;

- Making play equipment more physically challenging.
- An increase in the height of play equipment.
- Scalable features such as geometric climbers, rock climbing features and spatial nets.
- Utilizing the uniqueness of a play site and designing around the site rather than designing around the equipment.
- An increase in the importance of integrating the landscape and play equipment so the landscape becomes part of the play space.
- Incorporating more natural features and opportunities to interact with nature.
- Recognition of the need for individualised equipment.
- Creating opportunities for creative and imaginative play.
- A move to several free standing structures rather than one big structure.
- Spinners and merry go rounds.
- Play equipment for 6 month – 2 year olds.
- More accessible play spaces for children with disabilities.
- More supporting infrastructure such as areas for carers, shade, seating, toilets, bike racks, connections to paths.
- Developing youth hubs incorporating skate parks, flexible meeting space, half-court basketball and/ or parkour.
- Involving the community in the design of play spaces.
- Addition of outdoor fitness equipment.

REVIEW OF RELEVANT PLANS

WEIPA COMMUNITY PLAN 2012-2022

The Weipa Community Plan 2012-2022 provides a range of broader community ambitions with those most applicable being:

- Greening the town - increasing the amount of native trees and native landscaping in the town to create a green town and a shady environment.
- Over time, increasing the length of cycle and walking paths in the town and in particular; linking existing sporting and recreational facilities e.g. skate park.
- Ensuring that future generations can enjoy the environment as it exists at present by preserving key elements such as parklands.

SPORT AND RECREATION PLAN 2011-2016

Strategic Leisure Group were engaged in 2011 to prepare a comprehensive Sport and Recreation Plan for Weipa. Recommendations from this report relevant to the provision of play spaces included;

- Rationalise and improve the quality of facilities and spaces – Weipa’s small population and limited resources means it is imperative that facilities aren’t duplicated and the life span of facilities is maximized.
- Adopting a minimum standard of provision for public parks and a management approach based, creating a hierarchy of parks.
- Develop a destination park(s) in Weipa to provide a community meeting point for passive and active recreation.

WEIPA PLAY SPACES STRATEGY 2014

In late 2013, Weipa Town Authority engaged Playce P/L to assess the standard and provision of play spaces within the Town. This report outlined the importance of play to the social, cognitive, emotional and physical development of children and clearly outlined what constitutes a good play space. Through an onsite assessment and review of the broader distribution of existing play spaces across the town it highlighted, that whilst Weipa has an adequate number of play spaces that they are generally poor in both amenity and play value. Most focus only on physical play and primarily younger children (mostly 4 to 7 year olds).

Playce P/L reviewed the proposed park hierarchy in the Weipa Sport and Recreation Plan 2011-16 and gave consideration to the park hierarchy whilst completing the site assessments. Playce went on to add specific play requirements and amenity to the existing classifications to clarify the gaps in required new play implementation. The report then went on to recommend that the key actions for the Weipa Town Authority be the redevelopment of Rocky Point as a major destination park and the long term improvement to all existing play spaces to address the amenity, inclusivity and play value of each park.

WEIPA TOWN PLANNING SCHEME

At the time of the development of this Management Plan, the WTA was in the very early stages of preparing a new Town Planning Scheme to comply with the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*. The expected completion date is mid-2017 and whilst every effort has been made to consult with and liaise with the consultants engaged for the project, the TPS and future developments within the town in particular Nanum Stage 3 and the Dyfken estate may have impacts upon the future location and development of parks. The Management Plan will be reviewed and updated to reflect future progress and finalization of the Town Planning Scheme.

Discussions with the consultants resulted in agreement on the following points;

- The oversupply of public open space in Weipa and the need to rationalize open space such as play spaces to provide better quality facilities that fit within the WTA long term budgetary constraints.

- The uneven distribution of play spaces over the four main suburban areas in Weipa and the need to relocate and rationalise play spaces in areas of oversupply.
- Support for the proposal for a destination park at Rocky Point
- Using contributions by developers to improve existing parks as opposed to building new ones and designing new parks with adequate road frontage.

CURRENT PLAY SPACES

OVERVIEW OF EXISTING FACILITIES




Weipa currently has 10 sites containing play equipment, one of which is a skate park. The condition of the parks varies with equipment ranging in age from two years to 15 years plus.




In the development of this Plan, the Weipa Town Authority engaged Kico Playground Inspection Services to conduct a comprehensive playground inspection to determine the compliance to current Australian Standard requirements and specifications, provide detailed asset information on the play spaces and assess public safety and the overall condition of the play spaces.




At the completion of the audit, comprehensive inspection reports were presented with electronic asset information and a photographic register captured in accordance with requirements of AS/NZS 4486.1.1996. The inspection reports included comprehensive lists of all defects and repairs required on equipment ranked in priority order with approximate costs for rectification. This information has been included in the Play Space Action Plan.

The table below summarizes the contents and condition of each play space.

SUMMARY OF WEIPA PLAYGROUNDS

PARK	CURRENT FACILITIES	COMMENTS	IMAGE
Hibberd Park Rocky Point	Large combination unit, swings, merry-go-round, climbing prism, fitness station, nearby skate park, shaded tables and seating, public toilets, good shade trees.	This play space has equipment that appears to be relatively popular. The space is open and accessible and close to numerous mature trees. It is well located in the heart of the sporting and community precinct, near toilets, the skate park, cricket oval and additional relevant components. Community consultation supports that this is well used however it needs more shade over the facilities and more facilities for carers.	
Kookaburra Park, Kookaburra Crt	Small combination unit on rubberized soft fall, swing set, picnic tables and seats, bbq, shelter, bin and water.	The play equipment is limited and offers only physical play value. The site is tucked into the corner of the development and with the fencing makes access difficult and not appealing. Amenity is good. Additional play opportunities and opening of site important to improve community use.	
Golf Links Park, Golf Links	Shaded combination unit, shaded picnic tables and seats	Very limited play equipment however shade is beneficial. Lots of open space for kick about play. Needs significant increase in play opportunities and amenity to improve community use. Has good passive surveillance from McLeod drive and good access paths.	

<p>Merluna Park, Merluna Rd</p>	<p>Old coppers log fort, slide, rocker, swing set and spinning stool.</p>	<p>Play equipment, whilst old, provides a diverse range of physical opportunities. Little social, emotional and cognitive play though. This site is tucked away and appears rather private. Open lawn area provides social and sporting opportunities. Some good shade trees. Very little access to this park as it is not connected to any paths and has no road frontage</p>	
<p>Central Park, Circular Way</p>	<p>Old steel monkey bar and climbing frame, seats and table with mature trees and bike path.</p>	<p>Very old play equipment that needs replacement. Park has very poor natural surveillance with no street frontages or close parking. Park entrances tight and access is past many houses that have dogs in yards that can be intimidating. There is a major storm water drain servicing Trunding which runs through the centre of the park limiting location of play spaces, but there is excellent natural shade through the park and good cycle access which serves as a transport route for many residents of Trunding.</p>	
<p>Flinders Park, Flinders Street</p>	<p>Swing double swing set, rocker, small combination unit, open lawn area with mature trees and seating.</p>	<p>Swing and combination unit providing adequate physical play opportunities. Open lawn area provides informal play and sporting opportunities. Some good natural shade. More amenities and landscaping needed to provide more diverse play experience.</p>	

<p>Alstonia Park, Nanum</p>	<p>Upright spinner, chain climbing frame, rocker, double swings and timber unit with slide.</p>	<p>Play equipment, whilst old, provides a diverse range of physical opportunities. Little social, emotional and cognitive play though. Site is small and adjacent to housing so whilst good street frontage appears private. Some good shade trees.</p>	
<p>Joy Rollins Park, Nanum</p>	<p>Two play sites. Western site has combination unit, rubber soft fall, shade, Rubber crocodile sculpture, bbq shaded picnic area, and drink fountain. The Eastern site has large combination unit, swing set, shade and seating.</p>	<p>Whilst under shade, play equipment is limited primarily on physical play. Very poor access to the park with no street frontage to play space or park in general. Looped path provides good opportunities for bike/scooter play. No natural shade or landscaping. Space divided by large floodway. Some amenity with bbq and some sheltered seating areas.</p>	
<p>Lake Patricia, Kerr Point Rd</p>	<p>Large combination unit, swings, tyre play sculpture, sand digger, multi direction rocker, bins, artificial grass/social area shaded tables and seating, toilets, BBQ (byo gas) good natural shade.</p>	<p>Given that this space is a destination park, there is a good amenity with toilets, shelter, picnic tables, new seating areas and beach area. Play elements, whilst minor add value to broader community social focus. Additional play equipment and broader play elements can add even more value.</p>	

EXISTING PROVISION OF PLAY SPACES

The provision of play spaces in Weipa was assessed by Playce in the Weipa Play Spaces Strategy by looking at the number of play spaces per capita.

Whilst there are no compulsory requirements for the provision of play spaces per capita in Australia, comparison with several other local government's play space strategies show a range of provision between 1:1000 and 1:1300. The outcome of this analysis was that Weipa has a high number of play spaces per capita compared to some other local governments with a ratio of 1:340.

The challenge lies in the fact that the play value of these facilities is poor in most aspects and the equipment in some cases is old and below that of Australian Standards. Play spaces in Weipa typically meet some of the physical aspects of play such as basic motor skills of running, climbing, rocking, but fail to provide any spaces that stimulate the imagination and senses, or encourage dramatic social interactive play. The principles in this Plan will assist the WTA to address and improve the play value of existing play spaces.

EXISTING PLAY SPACE AMENITY

The inclusion of suitable amenities such as seating, shade, paths, landscaping and other infrastructure is important to ensure children and their carers have a safe, enjoyable experience in play spaces. This was supported by the results of the public consultation with the majority rating the importance of such amenities as high.

Visual observations and a review of the Play Ground Audit demonstrate a lack of such amenities through the Weipa play spaces particularly shade, paths, suitable seating for carers and any landscaping. The Principles in this plan will assist WTA to improve the provision and location of amenities to create more welcoming and inviting play spaces encouraging more active outdoor lifestyles.

EXISTING DISTRIBUTION OF PLAY SPACES

The distribution of facilities was also assessed in the Weipa Play Spaces Strategy using a walkable catchment area of 500m, as recommended in the Weipa Sport and Recreation Plan 2011-16. Distribution was found to be inconsistent throughout the town with Trunding having the greatest overlap of supply and Rocky Point East having the lowest level of supply, with a walkable catchment area in some instances of up to 1.2km to the nearest play space.

In considering the distribution of play spaces it is necessary to ensure the barriers to pedestrian access have also been taken into account. From the map (Image: 1) provided it is evident that many of Weipa's parks are land locked and enclosed by houses with poor access to cycle and walking networks and roads. Some parks are separated from housing areas by barriers such as drainage or main roads and therefore the walkable catchment is reduced.

The Andoom Oval Master Plan includes the development of a play space, which upon completion would improve the distribution of play spaces and reduce the walkable distance for much of East Rocky Point.

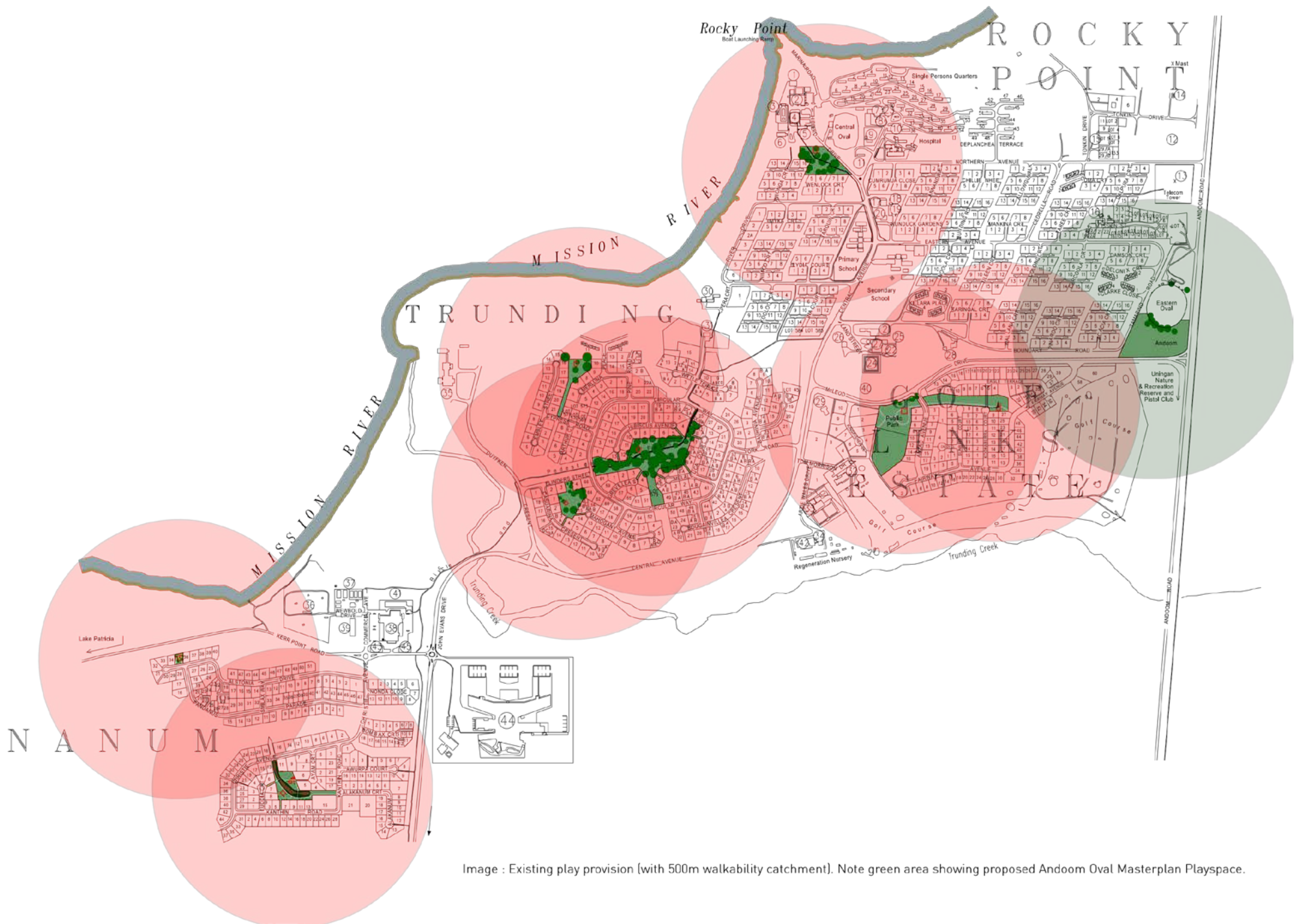


Image : Existing play provision (with 500m walkability catchment). Note green area showing proposed Andoom Oval Masterplan Playspace.

HIERARCHY OF PLAY SPACES

The underlying principle of a hierarchy of play spaces is to create a framework that will provide a consistent, structured, affordable approach to the provision of play spaces across the town. Arranging the play space network into hierarchical categories will ensure the scale, variety and number of play spaces will reflect the catchment area. In practice, a playground hierarchy and distribution criteria will increase the chances that residents have easy access to play spaces and the WTA are not managing excessive facilities.

The hierarchy of play spaces has been adopted from the proposed Open Space Strategy outlined in the Weipa Sport and Recreation Plan 2011-16. This plan proposes that two categories of play spaces will be provided for in Weipa; destination play spaces and local play spaces. A summary of the key characteristics of each category has been provided in the table below.

CHARACTERISTICS	DESTINATION PARKS	LOCAL PARKS
Purpose	Larger parks for users wanting to spend extended visits to meet friends have a BBQ and relax. Usually contain an attractor	Smaller parks designed as walk to parks servicing local residents within approximately 500m
Location	Generally co-located with other major recreational facilities Minimum size of 1 Ha + Minimum 50% road side frontage	Minimum size of 0.5 Ha Minimum of 50% roadside frontage
Catchment	3km radius – driving distance	500m radius – walking distance
Connectivity	Linked to cycle/walkways and has internal paths to facilities	Linked by cycle/walkways
Expected Duration of visit	A number of hours – this may be due to the other recreational facilities	Short duration 30mins – 1 hour
Average Capital cost	\$300,000	\$100,000
Approximate recurrent maintenance costs	\$35,000	\$5,000
Inclusions	Large shaded playground Shaded BBQ's with picnic tables Seats Bins Water Large Active Space Shade trees Unique features /Public Art	Small shaded Playground Shaded table Seats Bins Water Kick-about space Shade trees
Play Equipment	Contains a large number of play activities including public art work, some custom/unique features along with standard play equipment to meet swing climb slide needs	Standard play equipment to meet swing, climb, needs with some artwork or custom unique pieces where appropriate
Planning and Design	At least a Concept master plan of whole recreation area. A detailed concept plan of immediate play space assessing items such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play equipment siting • Accessibility and CPTED principles • Landscaping • Paths and linkages • Amenities – seating, tables, BBQs, 	A Sketch master plan of the whole play space assessing items such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play equipment siting • Accessibility and CPTED principles • Landscaping • Paths and linkages • Amenities – seating, tables, BBQ
Community Consultation Protocol	Comprehensive community consultation process that may include;	Basic community consultation process that may include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public display of concept plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial call for ideas/suggestions • Public display of concept plan • Notification to surrounding residents • Consultation with local groups playgroups/kindy/Weipa capability/ • On-site workshop/forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification to local residents
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COMMUNITY CONSULTATION SURVEY RESULTS

Community input was sought during the development stage of this management plan to gain a better understanding of community needs and expectations regarding the provision of play spaces. As part of this process a community survey was undertaken to determine whether residents were satisfied with the current play spaces and what improvements could be made.

A total of 123 surveys were received by WTA and the results revealed the following usage patterns;

- Over 60% of respondents had children between the ages of 0-3 yrs and around 45% had children 4-6 yrs of age.
- The majority of respondents visit playgrounds a few times a month rather than a few times a week and generally stay for an hour.
- Respondents generally visited the playgrounds between 8.00am – 10.00am and after 4.30pm due to the heat the sun.
- The majority of respondents travel to playgrounds via car, then walking with a small proportion riding bikes.
- The playgrounds are primarily used to access the play equipment, with social interaction and dog walking being the secondary reasons to access the playgrounds.
- The most popular playgrounds to visit were Hibberd Park, Joy Rollins Park and Lake Patricia.

The survey sought feedback on the importance of various features of playgrounds with shade, cleanliness and maintenance, safe play equipment, interesting play equipment and suitable settings for supervisors coming in the top five.

When asked to rate the same features in our playgrounds connection to pathways, safe play equipment, suitable settings for supervisors and interesting play equipment were rated highly, whilst shade, toilets, gardens and cleanliness were rated poorly.

This supports the need for the WTA to ensure maintenance is a high priority, assess the shade at each facility during the hours of highest use and to improve the general surroundings of the playgrounds with trees and other furniture.

The majority of respondents agreed there were enough play grounds in Weipa and were in support of rationalizing smaller parks for better quality parks. The desire for quality play spaces may explain why the two largest, well equipped parks were the highest frequented. The better facilities are a draw card to the park.

FUTURE PLANNING AND DESIGN

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PLANNING AND DESIGN

The planning and design of play spaces is a multidisciplinary undertaking that will require input from planning, community recreation and infrastructure specialists and thus requires a team approach from the Weipa Town Authority.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The principles in this management plan place a much greater focus on involving the community. Community involvement in the design phase is important in terms of gaining community buy in to the changes and to create a sense of ownership over the site. It is recognized that not every change to a play space will need community consultation, but where practical the WTA will ensure the community is made aware of any parameters and has an opportunity to contribute ideas and provide feedback to proposals.

“For a small community the main parks are pretty good, although some more additions to those parks would be great.”

CONNECTIVITY

To ensure that play spaces are used to their maximum, they should be as visible as possible and connected to other open spaces, cycling and walking networks and roadways. Weipa has a pattern of pocket parks that are enclosed by housing with very little passive visibility. These parks give a sense of being owned by the houses backing on to the park and not being open to the public.

Whilst this situation can't be reversed, the WTA will implement strategies to increase the connectivity of these pocket parks including increased signage to indicate access points on nearby paths or roads and information and mapping available on the website and on brochures.

Discussions with consultants responsible for the new Town Planning Scheme have also highlighted the need for consideration of 50% road side frontage to be required on all proposed open space in future developments.

SAFE PLAY ENVIRONMENT

Under statutory and common law, the Weipa Town Authority has legal obligations to the public. This is called 'Duty of Care'. The WTA's Duty of Care is to ensure that the play spaces are designed and maintained to standard to ensure the community's safety.

Play spaces in Australia are supported by Australian Standards for playgrounds. The relevant standards for the design, installation and maintenance 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;*
- *AS/NZS 4360 (2004) Risk Management.*

The 2016 Playground Audit identified both infrastructure items and management matters that need to be addressed to bring playground facilities up to Australian Standard. These items are identified in the implementation plan and have been allocated the highest priority.

TREE MANAGEMENT

Trees offer a great option for shade in the play spaces of Weipa however, the wrong selection of varieties, lack of maintenance and positioning can create a safety risk to the playground users. Where large trees exist around play spaces the following must be taken into consideration to ensure community safety;

- The stability of the tree and the risk of branches falling should be frequently assessed in accordance with industry practices.
- At risk branches overhanging playground equipment should be removed, unless there is significant impact on the tree.

Weipa has many large beautiful trees in public open space. Unfortunately many of these trees such as the Mahogany, have either shallow roots which can impact on soft fall effectiveness or drop large seeds or nuts which create a trip and fall hazard and ongoing maintenance issues. Correct plant selection is crucial to ensure shade from the trees does not create problems for use or maintenance in the future. The WTA should generate a list of acceptable trees which can be used for planting in play spaces as a part of future open space planning.

FENCING

At present there are no Australian Standards for fencing play spaces. The development of open space and associated facilities such as play spaces is the responsibility of the Local Government authority. Play Australia in its Good Play Spaces Guide encourages Councils not to erect structures such as fences or gates that will separate children from adults at play spaces but rather to design play spaces that will invite use by the whole family and provide adequate and comfortable seating for carers near the play equipment to enable better supervision.

The WTA strives to provide a safe play environment and all play spaces will be assessed to identify potential risks and determine appropriate controls. Play spaces will not be fenced as a standard however, barriers will be implemented to deter children from approaching an identified risk such as a road, a steep drain or a water body close to a play space.

The WTA will also consider other alternatives to fencing including;

- Planting shrubs and bushes to create borders and boundaries.
- Landscaping mounds and level changes.
- Bollards and barriers.

PLAYGROUND UNDER SURFACING

Under surfacing at play spaces can use up a large portion of a budget for both installation and maintenance therefore this needs to be thoroughly assessed during the planning phase. The two main purposes of surfacing in play spaces are for impact absorption and to provide accessible path of travel.

Play Australia do not recommend any one type of under surfacing over the other, instead Play Australia encourage the use of a diverse range of materials as both loose materials and synthetic materials have positives and negative aspects.

LOOSE SURFACES

Loose materials such as mulch, pea gravel, pine bark and sand are traditionally used for impact absorption and have the advantages of being readily available, cost effective, looking natural and attractive and can be used by children for play.

The disadvantages of loose materials are that they require frequent topping up and maintenance, can be washed or blown away, require a border, can be fouled by animals or rubbish and may pose an access challenge to some users.

SYNTHETIC RUBBER SURFACE

The advantages of synthetic rubber surfacing is that it offers predictable take-off and landing, they wear reasonably well, they can be colourful and patterned, and provide a high level of accessibility.

The disadvantage of this product is the initial expense to install, can be difficult to repair and can get extremely hot in hot sunny climates.

The remoteness of Weipa makes it quite difficult to source under surfacing materials and suppliers, and for this reason the preferred under surfacing or soft fall in Weipa shall be a combination of local sand and rubber matting tiles. The local sand has been impact tested as part of the Weipa playground audit and found to be suitable subject to appropriate maintenance activities. The rubber matting tiles can be installed by a local contractor, however the WTA will need to implement processes in the installation handover to ensure compliance with Australian Standards.

SUN SAFETY

Weipa has a tropical monsoonal climate with constant high levels of solar radiation and hot temperatures all year round. There is an increased awareness in the community of the risks associated with exposure to solar radiation and consequently there is an increase expectation that shade will be provided in play spaces. The community survey results revealed that providing shade at playgrounds is very important to the community.

The Queensland Department of Health in its document, *Creating Shade at Public Facilities – Policy and Guidelines for Local Government Ed 2*, advocates Local Government authorities contribute to skin cancer prevention strategies by increasing the provision of shade at public facilities. In this document Local Government is identified as the major player in the provision of shade for local communities and as a result there is a need to consider comprehensive and sustainable approaches to its provision. It goes further to provide technical guidelines for shade at parks and recommends all playground equipment, supervision areas, seating and tables and BBQ are shaded, and that playground equipment is preferably shaded with constructed shade.

There are significant budgetary issues related to the installation of constructed shade at play spaces. While shade sails provide immediate shade they can add up to 50% to the cost of a new facility and they are often subjected to vandalism placing additional pressure on the WTA budget. It is therefore imperative that the provision of shade is prioritized.

The WTA will provide shade for the play spaces using a combination of semi mature tree plantings and shade structures. The WTA will aim to achieve as a minimum, shade over play spaces during times of peak use which were determined as 9.00 – 11.00am from the community survey. The priority of these will be determined using the tools in *Creating Shade at Public Facilities – Policy and Guidelines for Local Government Ed 2*.

Shade sails will be installed at Destination Play Spaces across the town where the expected visit will be longer than an hour. WTA will plant semi-mature trees to the north, east and west of the play spaces as this is by far the most sustainable way to create shade at play spaces. It is important that an appropriate type of tree is planted to ensure additional hazards are not created. For more information refer to the Tree Management section of this plan.

“Good shade in this climate is by far the most important feature so the equipment doesn’t get hot during the middle of the day and can be utilised at any time of the day.”

The WTA sees sun safety as a joint responsibility between carers and the WTA and will also install signage at parks, promoting and encouraging sun safe behavior such as the picture below;

- Wearing appropriate hats and clothing outdoors.
- Using SPF30+ or higher sunscreen for skin protection.
- Seeking shade wherever possible.
- Avoid play in the hottest parts of the day.



PUBLIC ARTWORK

Public art is an important component of the public realm. Art communicates a socially rich environment and introduces creativity and imagination into our parks. Art can help us celebrate local cultures, values and distinctive features of an area such as the rich indigenous culture of the Western Cape. Public art in play spaces also has the potential to be more than just something to look at, it can be interactive, manipulated, climbed on, create sound, or inspire imagination and it can also be incorporated into practical design and amenities.

Use of public artwork can also generate interest and enthusiasm from community groups such as playgroups, kindergartens and the local school. Involving community groups can assist in fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility over a play space.

The WTA will consider inclusion of public art at all play spaces and will actively pursue integration of public art into amenities such as seats, drinking fountains, shelters, bike racks and barriers. Where possible custom designed artwork will be incorporated into the overall play space theme.

TEENAGE FACILITIES

This management plan primarily focuses on facilities and spaces for children aged two to twelve years and is therefore not the best tool to analyse and document the needs of teenagers in Weipa. This will need to be addressed by the WTA more thoroughly through development of a strategy or policy on youth.

It is worth noting however, that as there is a gradual transition in the types of play children participate in as they grow, co-locating facilities encourages interaction between age groups and enables families with older brothers / sisters to play in a stimulating environment while supervising their siblings. It is therefore appropriate to link the provision and siting of recreational facilities for teenagers and young adults such as skate facilities and half basketball courts with playground equipment sites.



PLAYGROUND MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

MANAGEMENT

Day to day management of play spaces is undertaken by the WTA Infrastructure team and the WTA Park and Gardens Contractors. The Communities' team are involved in the planning and design of upgrades and in preparation of promotional material relating to parks and playgrounds. Additional resources will be allocated to help manage and maintain playgrounds within Weipa.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance needs to be well planned and coordinated to protect the WTA's assets, prevent deterioration, avoid preventable accidents and ensure the play spaces remain attractive and usable. Lack of funds or ignorance about the responsibilities will not protect the WTA from liability should an incident occur on a poorly maintained facility. It is therefore imperative that the WTA maintain playground facilities at the Australian Standards as a minimum. AS/NZS4486.Pt1:1997 specifies the requirements for the development, inspection and maintenance of playgrounds and equipment to ensure a continuing level of function and duty of care and safety.

The maintenance program, policies and procedures provided as part of the 2016 Kico Playground Audit will be implemented by the WTA. This will include;

- Routine inspections
 - to be performed by parks and gardens staff on a monthly basis
 - to identify obvious hazards from vandalism and weather
 - inspection to be recorded on simple forms
- Operational inspections
 - to be performed by a competent staff member on a 6 monthly basis
 - a more detailed inspection to check the operation and stability of equipment and moving parts for wear and tear
 - Records are to be maintained
- Comprehensive inspections
 - to be conducted by an external provider every 12 months
 - to inspect structural integrity, the overall safety of equipment, noncompliance to Australian Standards and to check any changes made as part of the maintenance program
- Park Management System to record data on all play space sites
 - Equipment register
 - Maintenance register

FUNDING ALLOCATION

The costs in the action plan have been estimated using data from the Weipa Playground Audit, the Weipa Play Space Strategy and officers knowledge of similar works undertaken in Weipa. The progress of the plan has been scheduled to spread the costs as evenly as possible over the next five years, whilst still achieving regular significant milestones.

Completion of the actions outlined within this plan will require an estimated \$700,000. There is the potential for funds to be generated from the sale of land assets in particular with Alstonia park and the parks located within Trunding. These funds may be allocated to the implementation plan according to the priorities outlined in this plan and could potentially reduce the estimated costs significantly.

Failing the generation of funds through the sale of land, the time frames for the completion of the priorities in this plan will need to be revisited on an annual basis to meet the WTA budget.

PROMOTION/MARKETING

Marketing the playgrounds to potential users is very important. Many of the playgrounds in Weipa are situated in open spaces located within residential areas, generally off the road and not directly accessible to vehicles. Therefore it is important for the WTA to ensure the playgrounds are marketed appropriately to ensure families use them.

Facebook is a highly used type of social media. It is a great way for the WTA to advertise up and coming events, WTA projects, and current WTA community infrastructure. Facebook is currently and will continue to be used as a virtual noticeboard. Via Facebook community members will be directed to the WTA website for information regarding the Weipa playgrounds.

The WTA website has recently been upgraded. A webpage on playgrounds in Weipa will be developed in the near future. The webpage will include information such as;

- Location/ address of playground.
- A brief description and photos of the playground.
- What facilities are available at the playground or nearby.

DOGS

Dogs have the potential to create a safety risk to children in playgrounds and Play Australia recommends that dogs must be on a lead and under supervision of the dog owner in public play spaces or within 50 metres of a public play space. The WTA Local Law No.6 Keeping and Control of Animals states that; all dogs must be kept under effective control when in public places unless signs indicate otherwise. Users are encouraged to report any potential dog attacks to the WTA.

It is recognised that dog owners should be able to access certain areas to be able to exercise their dogs in an open space. Therefore the WTA has four identified areas around the Weipa Township where owners can exercise their dogs' off-leash. These areas are;

- Fenced area opposite Town Officer, for small dogs.

- Bushland behind Nanum through to Lake McLeod.
- Bushland from Northern Avenue through to Andoom Road.
- Rocky Point boat ramp, beach and bushland through to Albatross Bay Resort.

More information regarding dog off leash areas can be found on the Weipa Town Authority website page.

GRAFFITI AND VANDALISM

Graffiti in public spaces can cause great concern and offence to members of the public and to those with responsibility for the maintenance of these spaces. Through routine maintenance the WTA will inspect all playgrounds and remove graffiti. As mentioned in the Public Artwork section of this document, the WTA hope to encourage constructive art in public spaces rather than offensive, meaningless graffiti.

PLAYGROUND MANAGEMENT PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

PLAYGROUND	SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS	RECOMMENDATIONS
Skate Park, Rocky point	<p>The skate park gets extremely hot and permanent shade would increase its usability throughout the day. Additional street furniture for skaters and art work such as aerosol murals may create a more energetic atmosphere for youth. (subject to grant money)</p> <p>Co-locating additional facilities for youth such as a ½ court basketball should also be considered.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Install shade over the Skate park as and when budget allocations allow. 2. Investigate further development of the skate park into a youth precinct.
Hibberd Park, Rocky point	<p>Undertake a Master Plan for the precinct including Hibberd Park, Storm Surge Shelter, Skate Park, Tennis Courts and Cricket oval to create a more significant destination Play space and community hub incorporating shade, parking, bbqs, gardens, signage and traffic calming to increase linkage to cricket oval and improvements to the youth space at the skate park with a ½ court basketball court/rage cage concept.</p> <p>A detailed plan for the play space should also be produced that would ideally address ways to meet the cognitive, sensory, social and emotional needs of both children and carers using the park. The detailed plan should include additional play features, bbq with sheltered picnic seating, additional seating for supervision, some public art and attractive landscaping.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Undertake a Master Plan for the Rocky Point Precinct for WTA consideration. 4. Undertake a concept design and detailed drawings including cost estimates for a destination park for WTA consideration. Design should be broken down into stages over the next 5 years. 5. Investigate installing shade over some or all sections of the current play equipment. 6. Install BBQ and covered picnic facilities at Hibberd park.
Kookaburra Park, Golf Links	<p>Undertake a concept design to include the open space to the North of the existing play space and ensure access through to the new subdivision. Consideration should be given to improving the landscaping, providing facilities for carers, some open kick about space and some additional play pieces to link the new open space to the existing play space.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Investigate feasibility of relocating the BBQ to an alternative facility. 8. Remove the fence to open Kookaburra park to Golflinks estate stage 2. 9. Undertake a concept plan for a local park with cost estimates for the new open space from Golf links stage 2 for WTA consideration.

	Considering the limited parking at this location and that the facility is a local park, removing the bbq and relocating to another facility would bring it in line with the Hierarchy of Playgrounds and should be investigated.	
Golf Links Park, Golf Links	<p>Undertake design to create more play opportunities and amenity including seating, natural shade, gardens.</p> <p>With the large open space and good passive surveillance, this park is conducive to further development and long term planning could include additional play equipment, roadside parking a bbq and shelter.</p>	10. Undertake a concept plan for a local park with cost estimates for the future development of the park for WTA consideration.
Merluna Park, Trunding	<p>Play equipment here is nearing the end of its lifespan. The future of this park should be investigated as part of the Town Planning Scheme currently under development. Any developments in the proposed Dyfken Estate should also be taken into account. The decision about the future of this park should be made before any capital is spent on this location. Opportunities to be investigated include but are not limited to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep this park as Public Open space without play facilities and rebuild the park in the new Public Open Space in the proposed Dyfken Estate which has two road frontages maintain the park until this arises. • Sell the land and develop into additional lots and use funds to relocate the park to the fitness station between Rocky Pt and Trunding or to Flinders street • Negotiate to lose the Public Open space in the Dyfken Estate and take a contribution in lieu to improve facilities and access to Merluna. 	11. Investigate the rationalization of play spaces in Trunding from three locations to two, subject to the outcomes of the Town Planning Scheme and present options for consideration by WTA.
Flinders Park, Trunding	With the development of Lot 567 Flinders road this pocket park has become completely land locked with minimal access. There is a reasonable range of equipment with between 5 years and 15 years life span left in the equipment. Additional seating, some signage at access points, andscaping and shade would improve the facilities. However, given the oversupply of play facilities in Trunding and subject to outcomes of the TPS	12. (As per Recommendation 11.) Investigate the rationalization of play spaces in Trunding from three locations to two, subject to the outcomes of the Town Planning Scheme

	<p>this play space should not be replaced at the end of its lifespan and no further development should occur at this site in the short term.</p>	
<p>Central Park, Trunding</p>	<p>The equipment is at the end of its lifespan, does not meet Australian Standards and needs to be removed immediately.</p> <p>The future of this park should be investigated as part of the Town Planning Scheme currently under development. Opportunities to be investigated include but are not limited to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep this park and redevelop a small local level play space suitable for 0-7 yrs. old to encourage the presence of parents with children. • Keep this park as Public Open space without play facilities and rebuild the park near the fitness station north of Trunding or another location. • Sell the land and develop into additional lots and use funds to relocate the park to an alternative location. <p>Should the final decision result in rebuilding a local Play space then a concept design for a local level play space consistent with the Play space hierarchy should be prepared and construction commenced. Considerations in the design should be given to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the lack of passive surveillance and the resultant target age group of the play equipment leaning towards the younger end of the spectrum 0-7yrs. • providing adequate facilities for carers of young children. • maintaining and improving cycle and walking access, including prams and bike racks. • landscaping for the surrounding public open space and the potential inclusion of Landcare activities. 	<p>13. Remove all existing play equipment.</p> <p>14. (As per Recommendation 11.) Investigate the rationalization of play spaces in Trunding from three locations to two, subject to the outcomes of the Town Planning Scheme.</p>

Alstonia Park, Nanum	This play equipment is nearing the end of its life span and should be removed. Given that there is a drain creating a barrier between this section of Nanum and Joy Rollins Park it is preferable to keep a play space in this locality, however the land on which this play space is located is prescribed as residential. Selling this block and relocating this play space to another parcel of land in the same area should be investigated. Funds from the sale of the land could then be used to fund additional work recommended in this plan.	15. Investigate selling Lot 310 Alstonia Drive and relocating this play space to an alternative location in north Nanum using the proceeds from the sale of the land. Develop as a local park. Report to WTA for consideration.
Joy Rollins Park, Nanum	Undertake a design to enhance the scooter/bike potential within the park offering a unique experience. The design should seek to improve the shade, landscaping and attractiveness of the open space accessibility and enrich quality of the play experience.	16. Undertake a concept design for a local park with cost estimates to enhance the landscaping and scooter/bike potential of this play space and present to the WTA for consideration.
Lake Patricia Park	<p>Play equipment is in good condition and some additional play pieces and landscaping at this park will improve the play value. The painted tyres will need to be relocated into the soft fall area with appropriate fall zones allowed for.</p> <p>Kerr Point Road is very close to the play space and the risks associated with this could be minimized by installing a fence, 1.5m high between the play space and the road. This fence is not to enclose the play space but serve as a barrier to children interacting with the road.</p>	<p>17. Install a barrier fence between the road and the play space.</p> <p>18. Relocate the tyres into the soft fall area.</p>
Andoom Oval	There is no play equipment currently located however as per the Andoom Oval Master Plan it is proposed to develop a play space in this location. The addition of this play space will address the current lack of play facilities within the Eastern Rocky point area. Given the current and proposed facilities to be developed at Andoom Oval it is proposed to develop a Destination Park as per the hierarchy outlined in this plan.	19. Develop a destination play space.

PLAYGROUND MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

To achieve the vision and goals regarding play space provision in Weipa a range of actions have been proposed. The actions have been broken down into financial years to assist with financial planning processes and within each year actions have also been allocated a priority ranking.

All resources are indicative and as they involve capital works will be presented to the

Area	Action	Priority	Time Frame
YEAR ONE 2016-17			
Administration	Implement Safety Management System as recommended in the Comprehensive Playground Audit 2016	A	1
Administration	Implement Safety Surface Material recommendations in Comprehensive playground audit 2016.	A	1
Alstonia Park, Nanum	Investigate the sale of Lot 310 Alstonia where park is currently located and identify an alternative block for relocation.	A	1
Hibberd Park, Rocky point	Survey Rocky point precinct	A	1
Hibberd Park, Rocky point	Prepare a concept design and cost estimates for WTA consideration. Design should be broken down into stages over the next 3 years.	A	1
Hibberd Park, Rocky point	Prepare detailed drawings for construction including electrical.	A	1
Hibberd Park, Rocky point	Implement Concept Plan Stage 1 - Install picnic shelter/s and BBQs	A	1
Rocky Point Precinct	Undertake master plan for the precinct to include current facilities and future facilities for Hibberd park, cricket oval, skate park, courts and parking.	A	1
Kookaburra Park, Golf Links	Remove fence to north of play space	B	1
Lake Patricia Park	Install fencing 1.5m high behind seating surrounding play equipment	B	1
Administration	Conduct a shade audit on all play spaces to confirm the need for type and priority of shade	C	1
Administration	Develop agreed list of preferred trees for POS planting	C	1
Lake Patricia Park	Investigate developing a relationship with the local land care group to replant/landscape with additional plants, mulch	D	1
TOTAL FOR YEAR ONE			

YEAR TWO ACTIONS 2017-18			
Hibberd Park, Rocky point	Implement Concept Plan Stage 2 - shade over play equipment	A	2
Hibberd Park, Rocky point	Implement Concept plan Stage 3 - grassed kick about/picnic space inc irrigation	A	2
Trunding Parks	Investigate the rationalisation of play spaces in Trunding from three locations to two subject to the out comes of the TPS and present options for consideration to the WTA.	A	2
Alstonia Park, Nanum	proceeds from sale of Lot 310	B	2
Alstonia Park, Nanum	Undertake concept design and cost estimates for new local level play space and report to WTA for endorsement.	B	1
Alstonia Park, Nanum	Prepare detailed construction drawings as per concept plan	B	2
Alstonia Park, Nanum	Implement Concept plan - Construct new play space, seating, landscaping	B	2
Kookaburra Park, Golf Links	Undertake survey, concept design to improve quality of play experience and amenities, and cost estimates for WTA consideration. Design to be staged over 5 years	D	1
Kookaburra Park, Golf Links	Prepare detailed construction drawings as per concept plan	C	2
Kookaburra Park, Golf Links	Implement Concept Plan Stage 1 - Extend path through to Fairway Ave	C	2
Kookaburra Park, Golf Links	Implement Concept Plan Stage 2 - grassed area irrigation and landscaping on Fairway ave frontage	D	2
Flinders Park, Trunding	Install directional signage on Flinders and Mahogany	D	1
Kookaburra Park, Golf Links	Install directional signage on Fairway Ave	D	1
TOTAL FOR YEAR TWO			

YEAR THREE ACTIONS 2018-19			
Hibberd Park, Rocky point	Implement concept plan Stage 4 - landscaping garden beds	A	3
Hibberd Park, Rocky point	Implement Concept Plan Stage 5 - install additional play equipment to link bucket swing to merry-go-round and swing	A	3
Joy Rollins Park, Nanum	Undertake survey, concept design to improve quality of play experience and amenities, and cost estimates for WTA consideration. Design to be staged over 5 years	D	1
Joy Rollins Park, Nanum	Prepare detailed construction drawings as per concept plan	B	3

Joy Rollins Park, Nanum	Implement Concept plan Stage 1 - seating and landscaping	B	3
Golf Links Park, Golf Links	Undertake survey, concept design to improve quality of play experience and amenities, and cost estimates for WTA consideration. Design to be staged over 5 years	D	1
Golf Links Park, Golf Links	Prepare detailed construction drawings as per concept plan	C	3
Golf Links Park, Golf Links	Implement Concept plan Stage 1 - seating and landscaping	C	3
Trunding	Undertake Concept plans and cost estimates for two play spaces in Trunding including surveying	D	3
TOTAL FOR YEAR THREE			

YEAR FOUR ACTIONS 2019-20

Trunding	Prepare detailed construction drawings as per concept plans	A	4
Trunding	Implement Concept plan for first park - play equip, seating, landscaping	A	4
Joy Rollins Park, Nanum	Implement Concept Plan Stage 2 - development of scooter/bike activities	B	4
Andoom Oval	Undertake Concept plans and cost estimates for destination park including surveying	D	3
Skate Park, Rocky point	Undertake a concept design with cost estimates to enrich youth facilities as per this plan. Design should be broken down into stages.	D	3
Skate Park, Rocky point	Implement Concept Plan Stage 1 - shade over skate park	B	4
Skate Park, Rocky point	Incorporate art into the Skate park – seek grant to fund	C	2
TOTAL FOR YEAR FOUR			

YEAR FIVE ACTIONS 2020-21

Kookaburra Park, Golf Links	Implement Concept Plan Stage 3 - additional play equipment and amenities	A	5
Trunding	Implement Stage 1 of second park - play equip, seating, landscaping	A	5
Golf Links Park, Golf Links	Implement Concept Plan Stage 2 - additional play equipment	B	5
Skate Park, Rocky point	Implement Concept Plan Stage 2 - youth area	B	5
TOTAL FOR FIVE YEAR			
TOTAL ESTIMATE FOR FULL PLAN			

Maintenance	Complete Priority B works from the 2016 Playground audit High priority works list	A	1
Maintenance	Complete Priority C works from the 2016 Playground audit High priority works list	A	1

PLAN DEVELOPMENT, REVIEW AND REPORTING PROCESS

The Playground Management Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis to;

- Ensure the plan and strategies still align with the WTA's corporate and business plan
- Identify new issues and strategies to be incorporated into the plan
- Review submissions from the members, staff and community for inclusion and discussion.

The review will take place prior to the budget being finalised each year to ensure sufficient funds are set aside for new projects and services.

Performance against the Playground Management Plan will be provided through the business reporting process.

REFERENCES

Dogs and play spaces from Play Australia website

Fencing and public play spaces from Play Australia website

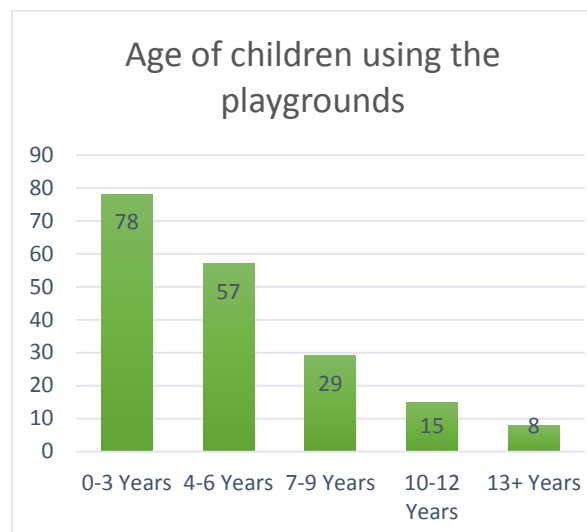
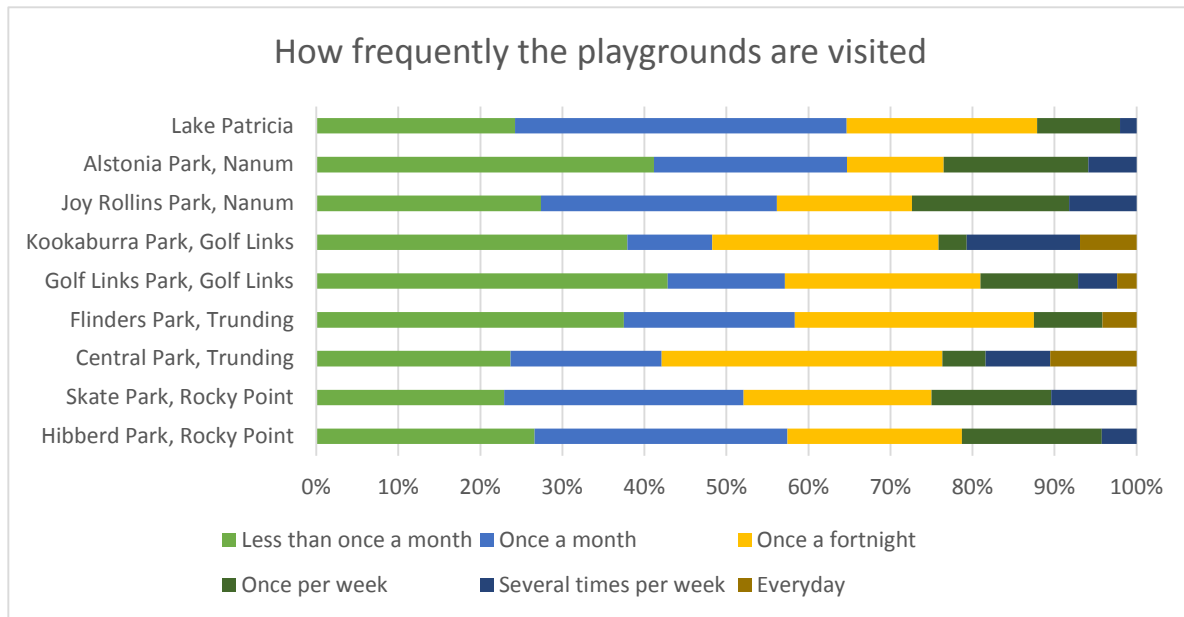
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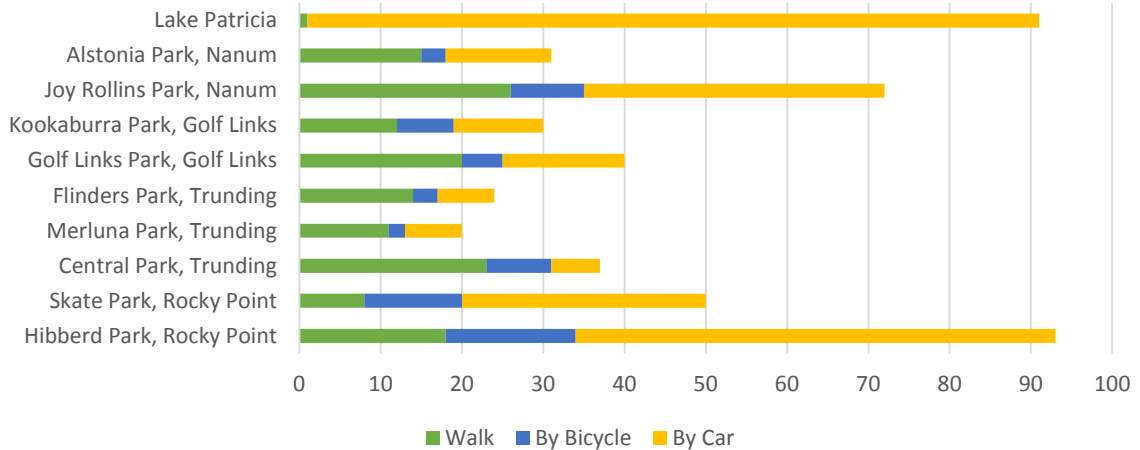
Klingensmith

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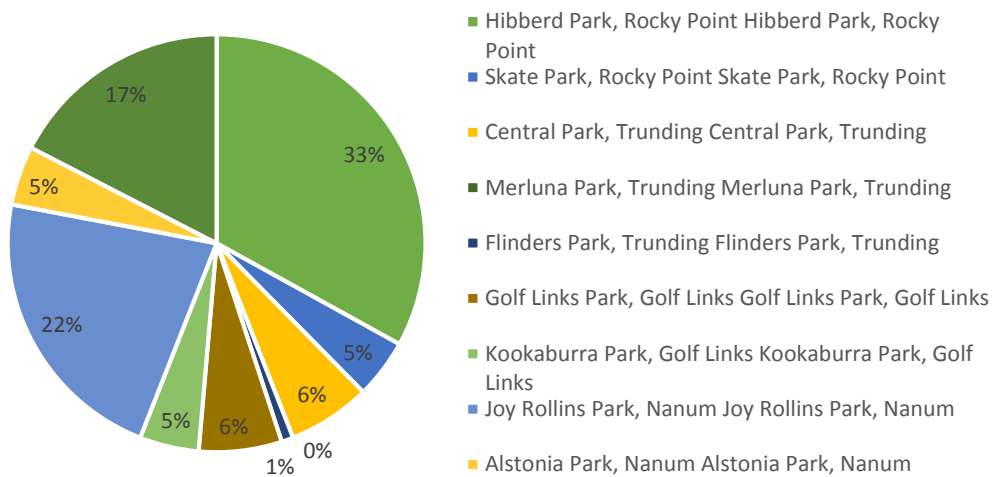
APPENDIX 1- COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS GRAPHED



How people travel to playgrounds



Playgrounds visited most frequently



Why people visit the playgrounds

