

INCLUSIVE PLAY POLICY 2023

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all play spaces designed, constructed, upgraded or renewed by Clarence City Council are inclusive and provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to experience high value play through a universal design approach.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- all new play spaces and any modification of existing play spaces owned or managed (or proposed to be owned or managed) by council at all stages of scoping, funding, design, documentation and construction
- any proposal or application to transfer land to council on which it is intended to construct a play space or modify an existing play space, and
- all works associated with the ongoing maintenance of play equipment and play spaces.

3. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to this policy:

Inclusive	Means welcoming, valuing and including everyone in all aspects of life.
Play	Means any behaviour, activity or process that is freely chosen, self-directed and intrinsically motivated for fun and pleasure, either individually or in groups.
Play space	Means a dedicated public outdoor environment where play can take place on and around play equipment and other play items.

Inclusive play space	Means a play space that offers recreational and social opportunities for all people regardless of age, ability, culture or gender.
Play equipment	Means purposely designed, manufactured and installed equipment and structures that facilitate children to play either on or with. For example: swings, slides, climbing structures and rockers.
Play item	Means items that function the same as play equipment but are not manufactured (for example, logs, boulders and stepping stones).
Play value	Describes the range and quality of play opportunities and experiences offered collectively by a play space or individually by play items or equipment.
Universal design	Means an approach which focusses on the design and composition of the environment so that it may be accessed, understood and used by people of all ages and abilities, beyond minimum legislative compliance.
Life-course	Means taking an approach to ageing based on functional capacity and quality of life from birth to death.
Council	Means the Clarence City Council.
Policy	Means this policy.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Council will ensure, as far as practicable, that its play spaces are inclusive and accessible and provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to participate in high value play.

Council will do this by:

- Incorporating industry best practice for universal and inclusive play space design into the delivery of all new play spaces and the renewal, upgrade and maintenance of existing play spaces.
- Continually improving council's play space network, the delivery of new play spaces, and the renewal, upgrade and maintenance of existing play spaces and infrastructure with inclusivity as a key outcome and deliverable.
- Making access and inclusion a key objective in the development of strategic documents related to play spaces or public open space.
- Facilitating ongoing professional development and training in relevant fields to staff involved in the design, delivery or maintenance of play spaces.
- Utilising public consultation as a tool for understanding community needs and aspirations around inclusive play.

Council recognises that there is no single way to provide access for every person or set of rules to make a play space accessible. Best outcomes are achieved when decision makers have a high level of awareness about different abilities and access to a wide range of information they can use strategically in the context of planning for inclusive play spaces.

5. RELATIONSHIP TO COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

The following objectives are identified in the *Clarence City Council Strategic Plan 2021-2031*:

- **A people friendly city**

Promoting active and healthy lifestyles through provision and support of programs that improve physical and mental health.

Continuing to develop and maintain a quality open space network.

- **A well-planned and liveable city**

Developing and implementing contemporary, funded, asset management plans for all council asset types.

In line with our Sport and Recreation Strategy, work with local clubs, state and regional organisations and other levels of government to meet the sport and recreation needs of our community.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

The legislation and documents listed below form the framework to give effect to this Policy:

LEGISLATIVE (ACTS, REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS)

- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (Tas)*
- Australian Playground Standards (various)

COUNCIL POLICY, PLANS, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

- Community Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2032
- Active Living Strategy 2022 - 2032
- Access and Inclusion Plan 2021-2025
- Access and Inclusion Assessment Toolkit 2018
- Age Friendly Clarence Plan 2018-2022
- Community Engagement Policy (2020)
- Public Open Space Policy (2013)

7. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

The purpose of this policy will be achieved through:

COMMITMENT TO BEST PRACTICE

Council's approach to inclusive and universal play space design will be guided by published guidelines and toolkits that provide the frameworks for delivery of best practice, inclusive play spaces.

All play space capital projects or maintenance activities will incorporate industry best practice principles into planning, design and delivery.

Council will ensure staff receive appropriate training and hold appropriate qualifications to deliver best practice outcomes.

Council will engage with professional organisations delivering best practice education and advocacy on inclusive open space and play space design.

COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Council's play space network will have inclusivity and universal design principles as a key deliverable for new play infrastructure or renew, upgrade or maintain existing infrastructure.

NEW PLAY SPACES

All new capital play space projects will set inclusion and universal design as a key design driver.

Inclusion will inform all aspects of capital play space projects including scoping, funding, design, consultation, detail documentation, specification, construction and maintenance planning.

RENEWAL AND UPGRADE OF EXISTING PLAY SPACES

Council will seek to upgrade rather than renew (like for like) existing play spaces and playgrounds where opportunities exist to improve inclusive play value and outcomes.

Renewal and upgrade projects will be prioritised and scoped to consider their value and offering as part of the surrounding network of play spaces and in the context of strategic directions set out in future Open Space and Play Strategies.

MAINTENANCE OF PLAY SPACES

All maintenance works will consider inclusion and universal design.

Staff will work collaboratively to assess the opportunities and constraints of each site and project and seek to deliver best practice and universally designed outcomes

STRATEGIC PLAY PLANNING

Strategies and strategic plans adopted by council which relate to the provision of open space for passive recreation, or the development of council's play space networks will incorporate inclusivity as an objective and will incorporate the principles and requirements of this policy.

Strategies developed, as part of council's overall strategic framework to provide for strategic play planning across our city may include:

- Open Space Strategy to provide a framework for the provision of open space for passive recreation , and
- a Play Strategy to guide the ongoing renewal, upgrade and maintenance of existing play spaces and the planning and development of new play spaces.

STAFF TRAINING AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Council will facilitate ongoing professional development and training in the fields of inclusion and universal design as well as best practice playground design, maintenance and management.

Relevant training and development opportunities will be offered to staff engaged in the design, construction and maintenance of play space projects.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONSULTATION

Council recognises that consultation with the community and key stakeholders is critical for the successful delivery of inclusive play spaces.

Council will actively consult with the community in relation to play space projects and relevant plans or strategies in accordance with council's Community Engagement Policy 2020.

Consultation activities will seek specific feedback and comment on inclusive design requirements and will include, where possible, direct consultation with key stakeholders such as people with a disability (or their parents or guardians) and disability advocates.

8. IMPLEMENTATION AND COMMUNICATION

The Manager Environment, Facilities and Recreation is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

This policy will be communicated via:

- council's website
- internal circulation to staff, and
- as part of any community engagement activities related to new or modified play spaces.

9. REPORTING

Reporting against the objectives of this Policy will be provided to council through the existing quarterly reporting process.

10. ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

TABLE OF AMENDMENTS

No.	Date	Brief Details
1	13 Mar 24	Minor amendments to reflect changes in role titles and date policy adopted by the Council.

APPROVAL

COUNCIL APPROVAL DATE	24 April 2023
REVIEW	Every 5 years
RESPONSIBLE POSITION	Heads of Infrastructure and Natural Assets
ECM REFERENCE	ID 4927226