



LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Preserving the Past, Enhancing the Future

Playground Strategy

2017 - 2032

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Section 1 – Introduction

1.1 Vision

Leeton and its surrounding villages is known as a family friendly place to live with wonderful sporting and recreational facilities. Playgrounds perform an important role in attracting and keeping families in the Leeton Shire area. Playgrounds are one of the most utilised recreation assets Council maintains.

The vision for this strategy:

“Leeton Shire Council will continue to be recognised for being one of the most family friendly local government areas in NSW through the sustainable provision and management of high quality, accessible, diverse, innovative, safe and fun playgrounds that contribute to the developmental needs of all children. These play spaces will become community hubs that encourage interaction and community wellbeing”

1.2 Purpose

This strategy will be a single document that will guide all aspects of playground management. The primary purposes of this strategy are:

- Listen to the communities expectations by undertaking regular community consultation, especially when new developments are to be undertaken
- Ensure the community has access to quality playgrounds for the next 20 years by applying best practice asset management principles
- Create great future play spaces in new subdivisions where appropriate by providing policy direction
- Ensure the future financial sustainability of the playground network

1.3 Relationship to Community Strategic Plan

Playgrounds are important in supporting the physical, social and intellectual development of children. They also play a key role in providing great outdoor spaces ensuring a diverse range of recreational and social opportunities for young children, parents and caregivers.

The planning context for this Strategy is set by the Leeton Community Strategic Plan - Leeton on the Go - Towards 2030. Specific playground goals in the strategy are:

Theme 1 – A Healthy & Caring Community

- “Ensuring public facilities, services and playgrounds cater for everyone in the community and are universally accessible”

Theme 2 – A Quality Built Environment

- “Children along with their mums, dads and grandparents enjoy a fair distribution of well-equipped playgrounds across the Shire that are always in a good working order”
- “Ensuring equipment in local parks is kept current and in good working order”

1.4 Review

This strategy will be reviewed every five (5) years or as required in line with statutory requirements to ensure that underlying principles of the plan remain sound and that the playground network and redevelopment priorities are appropriate.

While the strategy provides the overarching strategic framework for playground redevelopment across the shire, the Playground Strategy will be flexible to enable new or revised recommendations to be endorsed or modified as required.

This five (5) year review will involve a report to Council evaluating how well the strategy is being implemented. This report to Council will also recommend any adjustment to the redevelopment priorities set out in the Strategy.

Section 2 – Leeton Shire Playground Network

2.1 Existing Playground Network

Leeton Shire Council currently manages 16 playgrounds within the LGA. These playgrounds vary significantly in the level of infrastructure provided.

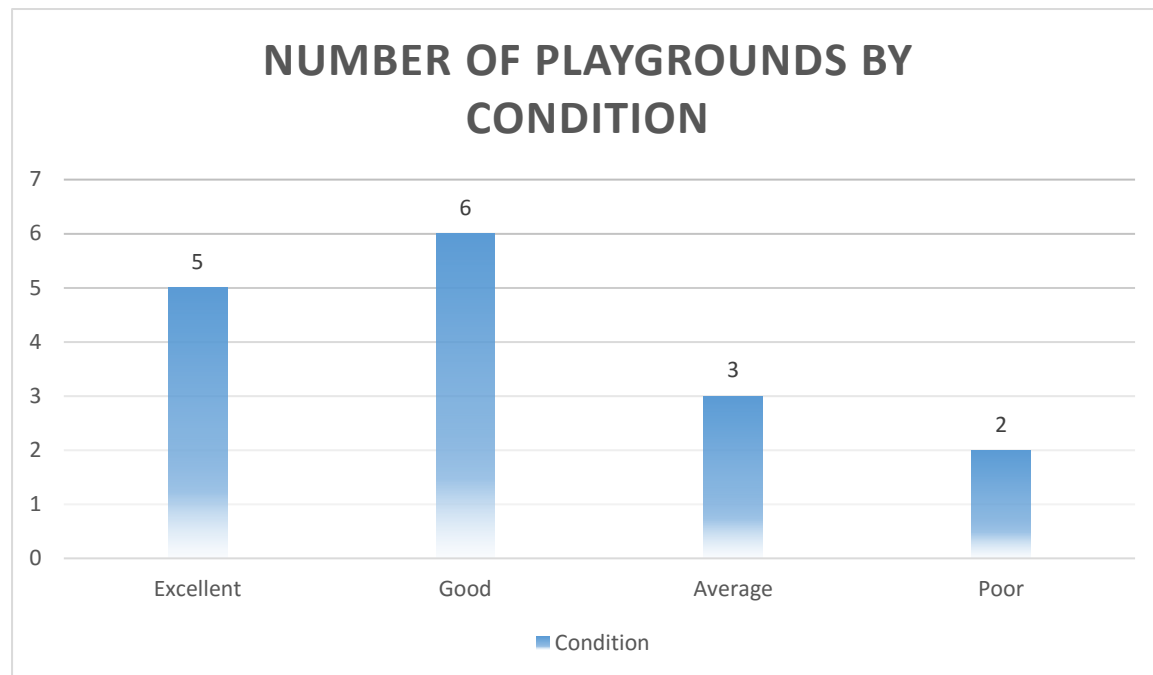
Table 2.1 lists the various playgrounds in the Leeton LGA. The age and condition of the equipment is also specified.

Location	Year of Installation	Condition of Equipment
Central Park	2009	2
Enticknap Park	1990 - 2006	3
Gossamer Park	1997 - 2017	3
Graham Park	1996 - 2017	2
Leeton Ovals Complex	1999 - 2016	2
McCaughey Park	1998 - 2012	2
Mountford Park	2002 - 2016	1
Murrami Park	2012	1
Pulbrook Park	1990	4
Ramponi Park	1990 - 2011	2
Waipukarau Park	1990	3
Wamoon Park	2006	2
Wandoo Playground	2013	1
Waring Park	1990	4
Whitton Park	2015	1
Wiradjuri Playground	2011	1
1. Excellent 2. Good 3. Average 4. Poor		

2.2 Age & Condition of Playgrounds

The average age of the playground equipment across all of Council's playgrounds is approximately 10 years. The useful life of playground equipment is generally between 20 – 25 years depending on equipment type. Most of Council's equipment has been assessed as average to excellent, with only two playgrounds rating in the poor category.

Figure 2.1 Number of Playgrounds by Condition



2.3 Equipment Type

Currently there is a wide range of equipment types in Council's playgrounds. Equipment of the past 20 years has focused on relatively static colourful plastic and steel modular structures. In more recent times playground companies have focused on providing exciting new motion based pieces of equipment such as mammoth swings, giant see-saws, tower slides and cable sky riders. The challenge of meeting stringent safety standards whilst still providing active, engaging and challenging playground equipment is at the forefront of designers and manufacturers aims.

Table 2.4 Current Playgrounds Facilities & Supporting Infrastructure

	Slippery Dip (Free Standing)	Basket Swing	Tower With Slides	Senior Swings	Junior/Toddlers Swings	Modular Play Structure	See-Saw	Spring Rockers	Ball Sports Court	Climbing Net	Cable Ride	Soft Fall Zones	BBO Facilities	Toilet Facilities	Seating	Picnic Shelters	Water Station	Disability Access	Playground Fencing	Shade Sails
Central Park	✓			✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Enticknap Park	✓			✓			✓					✓								
Golf Course Estate																				
Gossamer Park		✓		✓				✓				✓	✓		✓					
Graham Park	✓	✓		✓		✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Leeton Ovals	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓						
McCaughey Park	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Mountford Park		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
Murrami Park	✓			✓		✓	✓					✓		✓	✓	✓				✓
Noel Pulbrook Park	✓			✓		✓						✓			✓					
Ramponi Park	✓			✓								✓								
Waipukarau Park	✓			✓								✓								
Wamoon Park	✓			✓	✓							✓			✓					
Wandoo Playground	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓					✓			✓					
Waring Park	✓			✓	✓							✓		✓	✓					
Whitton Park	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓					
Wiradjuri Playground		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓				✓			✓					

2.5 Playground Distribution

Figure 2.1 Current distribution of playgrounds across Leeton LGA

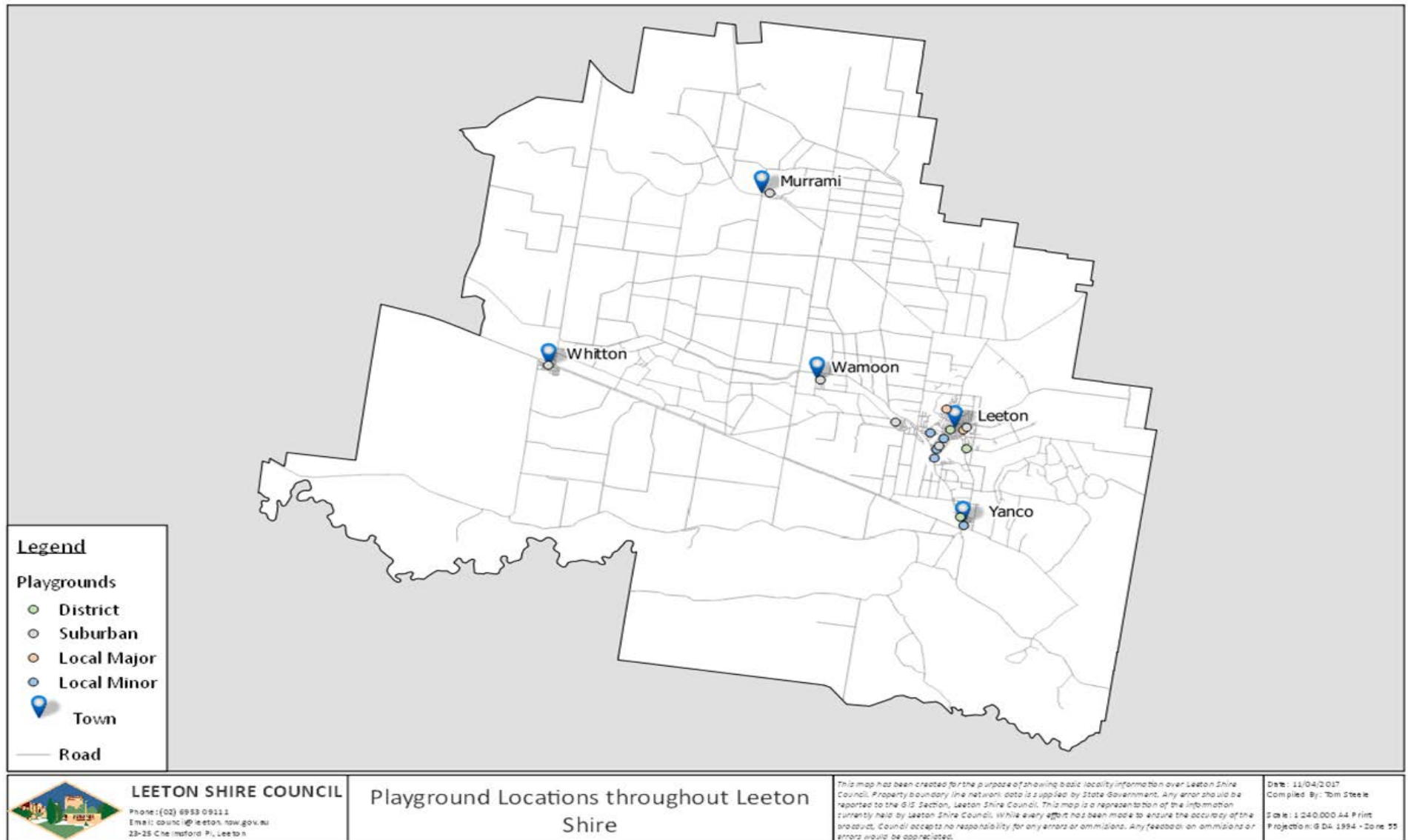


Figure 2.2 Playground locations - Leeton

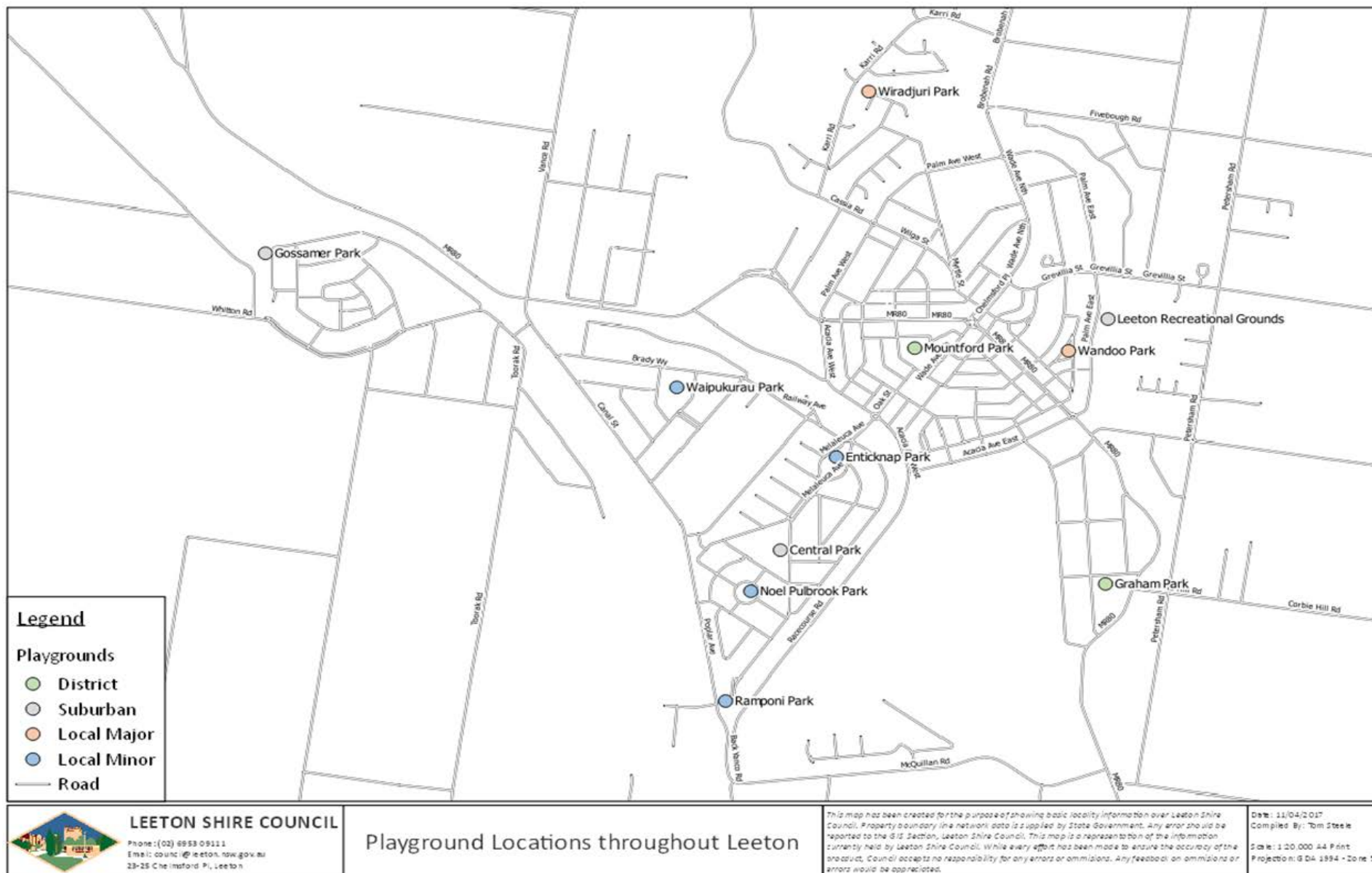


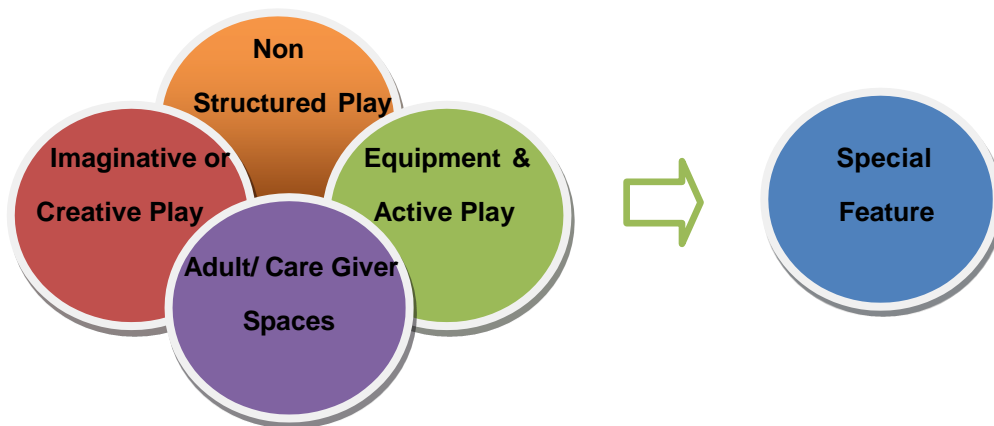
Figure 2.3 Playground locations – Yanco/Murrumbidgee/Whitton/Wambo



Section 3 – Design & Provision

3.1 Play space & age groups of children

When designing a new playground, or upgrading an existing one, it is important to consider both the equipment design and the context within the park that the equipment is being placed. This context is often referred to as the 'Play Space' Figure 3.1 below identifies the key elements of a play space.



Source: *The Good Play Space Guide*

A report by the Children's Institute for Learning and Development (CHILD) in 2004 distinguished children into three (3) main groups based on ability. These age groups are 0 to 3 years; 4 to 7 years; and 8 to 12 years. If we consider this in relation to the elements of play model, we can identify the development needs of children in each group, and subsequently highlight appropriate equipment, facilities and environments for playground design based on each age group. This will assist Council in providing diversity in playground provision for children of all ages across the LGA

3.2 Classification of Playgrounds

By establishing a hierarchy for playgrounds Council will have a framework by which it can deliver a more consistent approach to the management, development and maintenance of play space areas which are similar in scale, scope and function. It will enable Council to plan for a suite of facilities providing diversity for the community, and a consistent distribution throughout the LGA which minimises duplication of like spaces and facilities within neighbourhoods and districts.

Table 3.1 Leeton Shire Council Playground Hierarchy

	Local Minor Playgrounds	Local Major Playgrounds	Suburban Playgrounds	District Playgrounds
Catchments and Length of Stay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service local residents • 5-10 min walking distance (approx. 500m) • About 30 min stay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service local residents • 10-15 min walking distance (approx.. 750m) • About 1hr min stay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At minimum services the whole suburb • Residents will come from other suburbs • Most people drive to the locations • About 1-2 hour stay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services local and wider region • Visitors may stay for several hours • Most people drive to the locations • About 2-4 hour stay
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kerbside car parking • Walking (connections with footpaths) and on street parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kerbside car parking • Walking (connections with footpaths) and on street parking • Connection to cycling network in some instances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination of kerbside car parking and designated car park spaces • Walking (connections with footpaths) and on street parking • Often a range of pedestrian and cycle network connections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated car parking • Disability parking sometimes available • Often a range of pedestrian and cycle network connections
Age Ranges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least two (2) age group • Generally seven (7) years and below 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least two (2) age group • Generally seven (7) years and below 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad range of children and carers • Generally all age groups catered for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All age groups up to 12 years catered for • Will have activities for teenagers within the play space

Equipment Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic playground with up three (3) items including swings & slide and At least two (2) age groups • Indicative value of equipment to \$30,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate level equipment usually with more than 3 separate items • At least two (2) age groups • Indicative value of equipment to \$50,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More advanced equipment than local parks. • Various levels of challenges with wide appeal • Indicative value of equipment to \$100,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major all-age playground • Large number of play activities • Equipment caters for wide range of age groups (0-12 years) • Indicative value of equipment to \$150,000
Supporting Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one(1) seat & litter bin • Some natural shade • Often close to a better resourced playground 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one(1) seat & litter bin • Multiple tree plantings for natural shade • Irrigated grass areas • May have toilet facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several bins, seats and picnic settings. • Multiple tree plantings for natural shade • May have artificial shade • Toilets may be available • May have BBQ facilities • Large irrigated turf areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several bins, seats and picnic settings. • Multiple tree plantings for natural shade • May have artificial shade • Toilets may be available • May have BBQ facilities • Large irrigated turf areas • Several bins, seats and picnic settings.
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waring Park • Pulbrook Park • Ramponi Park • Enticknap Park • Waipukarau Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wandoo Playground • Wiradjuri Playground • Pulbrook Park • Golf Club Estate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gossamer Park • Wamoon Park • Murrami Park • Leeton Ovals Complex • Central Park • Whitton Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mountford Park • McCaughey Park • Graham Park

3.3 Examples of category types



Figure 1 District Playground - Mountford Park



Figure 2 Suburban playground - Gossamer Park



Figure 3 Local major playground - Wandoo Playground



Figure 4 Local minor playground - Ramponi Park

3.4 Park Land Selection Principles

The following principles are used to guide the selection of land for playgrounds where new playgrounds are to be established. Modifications to existing playground locations where practicable in order to meet the below principles may be undertaken:

- Site selection should be reasonably flat where possible.
- Site should be unencumbered and free of obstructions such as utility easements. If these are required they should not dominate the space and not be obvious so the park can still be a positive visual amenity.
- Playgrounds should not be constructed in detention basins.
- Land size suitable to the playground classification should be selected where ever possible according to the playground hierarchy.
- The park and playground layout should provide for good supervision (clear lines of sight) to allow for passive surveillance as a deterrent to inappropriate behaviour.

3.5 Play Equipment Selection Principles

The following principles are used to guide the selection of playground equipment (*Adapted from Ryan, K (2006). Play to live, live to play: Playground development, from design to construction and beyond*).

- The playground hierarchy is to be used as a guide during the concept design phase.
- Based on previously identified best practice design, the selection of equipment needs to provide maximum play value. Equipment should be varied and involve activities that are of interest to children of a range of ages and development stages. Individual pieces cannot cater for all age groups and abilities and as such, several pieces of varied equipment are recommended for local playgrounds. Suburban and Regional parks must have varied equipment.
- Equipment for cognitive (imaginative) play – involves thinking and reasoning, observation and exploration. These should principally be incorporated into Suburban or Regional playgrounds.
- Equipment for social/dramatic play – can be provided for with interactive elements, creative landscape design and plant selection. Examples include shop fronts, steering wheels, trains, cubby houses and forts etc.
- Equipment for physical/active play – include equipment and open space facilities for crawling, running, jumping, swinging, spinning, climbing, and balancing. It is important not to be repetitive in the selection of play features and that they cater for both upper and lower body activities.

- Equipment provision must provide for graduated levels of challenge. Older children enjoy using physical apparatus, but they should be more challenging than that provided for lower age groups.
- Single themed approaches (themed playgrounds) have initial attraction, but kids tend to tire of these quickly. Non thematic or abstract equipment is more adaptable. Use of thematic design should be done discretely for better effect and generally included in larger playgrounds.

3.6 Support Infrastructure Selection Principles

Support infrastructure such as seating, BBQ's, shelters, toilets, water stations, litter bins, shade structures and signage shall be as per the hierarchy. All new playgrounds and installations will be risk assessed with consideration to the following:

- BBQ use
- Site distances
- Distance of toilets from play area
- Passive surveillance
- Likelihood of vandalism
- Suitability of equipment to withstand vandalism
- Compliance with relevant standards
- Access to potable water
- Adequate litter bins
- Safe access in relation to conflict with traffic
- Need for fencing
- Need for signage
- Tree species selection
- Distance for open water i.e. drains, lakes, channels

When designing playgrounds it is important for the designer to consider play space, not just the play equipment. The design when finalised should provide a layout for play equipment, softfall, edging, trees, seating and if required shade sails, fences and litter bins after considering the following items:

- Initial consideration is given to the slope or topography of the specific playground site. This has important implications to the location of the playground equipment and associated features for provision of inclusive access, playground safety and any potential drainage issues.
- The design will provide suitable entries, exits and access to the play space and the ease of movement through the playground by both children and caregivers must be considered. It is important to identify important relationships between both play facilities and support amenities. For example the positioning of toddler play areas close to support amenities such as toilets with a baby change room.

- The design will consider the conflict of activities. Moving equipment such as swings and flying foxes should not be located near static structures or traffic flow lines. Other examples include avoiding positioning exit points of slides onto creative sand play areas. Play areas for differing age groups will be separated appropriately.

3.7 Risk Management and Safety Standards

As a requirement of statutory and common law, local government authorities have legal obligations (duty of care) to the public. This duty of care requires Councils' to take reasonable care to avoid foreseeable risks to visitors using areas under their management. The question of what is "foreseeable" and "reasonable" is complex. To ensure Council is meeting its duty of care obligations the following Australian Standards are used to guide the design, maintenance and management of playgrounds:

- Australian and New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 4486.1: Playgrounds and playground equipment Part 1: Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation.
- Australian and New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 4422: Playground surfacing - Specifications, requirements and test methods
- Australian Standard AS 1428: Design for access and mobility
- Australian Standard AS 4685:2014 Parts 1-6: Playground equipment

Part 1 – General safety requirements & test methods

Part 2 – Particular safety requirements & test methods for swings

Part 3 - Particular safety requirements & test methods for slides

Part 4 - Particular safety requirements & test methods for runways

Part 5 - Particular safety requirements & test methods for carousels

Part 6 - Particular safety requirements & test methods for rocking equipment

Part 11 - Particular safety requirements & test methods for spatial networks

Australian and New Zealand Standard AS/NZS ISO 31000: Risk management - Principles and guidelines;

Council uses these standards as the minimum benchmark required for playground equipment, design, compliance, installation, maintenance and inspection. Although these standards are not mandatory through legislation, in a litigation case they will be referenced as the minimum necessary requirements. This approach is consistent with the requirements of Statewide Mutual's Best Practice Manual for Playgrounds (2010).

Council should also ensure the provision of comfortable areas for caregivers to encourage them to stay and supervise the play activities. Previous evidence has linked effective supervision to a reduction of injuries and crime. Designers should also consider the location of playgrounds to take advantage of passive surveillance from adjacent houses and streets and; have clear lines of site to enable public supervision from users within the park.

Mature trees are often the primary source of shade for playgrounds. During routine safety inspection of playgrounds a visual inspection of the adjacent trees is undertaken to ensure stability.

New play spaces are designed in accordance with the 'Safer by Design' principles. These principles were developed in co-operation between NSW Police, Local Councils, Government Departments and private sector organisations. These principles ensure that development proposals are routinely assessed for crime risk and preventable risk is reduced before the development is constructed. The 'Safer by Design' website can be viewed at:

http://www.police.nsw.gov.au/community_issues/crime_prevention/safer_by_design.

3.8 Access and Equity Issues

Local government is responsible for ensuring that all of its activities related to its infrastructure areas are as accessible as possible to, and consider the needs of, people with disabilities. The 1992 Federal Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) seeks to:

- Eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of disability;
- Ensure, as far as practicable, that persons with disabilities have the same rights to equality before the law as the rest of the community; and
- Promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

The DDA provides protection for everyone in Australia against discrimination based on disability. The DDA makes it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, services or facilities against people on the basis that they have had, or may have, a disability. The Act also makes it unlawful to discriminate against an associate of a person who has a disability. Their definition of disability includes disabilities which are physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory (e.g. a hearing or vision impairment), neurological, learning related, physically disfiguring and the result of a disease causing organism.

Playground designs should minimise frustration to children caused by inappropriate design while maximising diverse play opportunities and social interactions between children, and carers and children. The Good Play Space Guide (DPCD 2007) states: Children with a disability may find it more difficult to:

- *Communicate with other players;*
- *Engage in play for long periods;*
- *Be spontaneous;*

- *Draw on all senses to learn;*
- *Physically do many activities;*
- *Develop the skills to join in games;*
- *Play with other children without adult supervision; and*
- *Access nature and the multi-sensory stimulation it provides.*

Therefore, the guide recommends that universal design principles should underpin the design and development of all play facilities, to enable their use by children and carers of all abilities. The guide provides the following definition for universal design:

“Universal design means that environments, services and products are useable and accessible for people of any age and ability. Universal design improves the quality of life for everyone. Conventional design caters for the ‘average’ person, while universal design recognises that people have a range of capabilities.”

The Centre for Universal Design (1997) outlines seven principles of Universal Design:

- *Equitable Use – The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.*
- *Flexibility in Use - The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.*
- *Simple and Intuitive Use - Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.*
- *Perceptible Information - The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.*
- *Tolerance for Error - The design minimises hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions*
- *Low Physical Effort - The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.*
- *Size and Space for Approach and Use - Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.*

These principles offer designers guidance to better integrate features at the outset that meet the needs of as many users as possible and consequently, people with disabilities.

As part of this Playground Strategy all playground renewals and refurbishments will give appropriate consideration to accessibility and this strategy will compliment and reinforce the relevant sections of Leeton Shire Council's - Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

3.9 Community Consultation for New Playgrounds

Consultation is a vital component in the development of playgrounds for public use, and can assist in a number of areas including:

- Determining community aspirations and expectations
- Keeping the community informed by providing information on proposed or desirable developments
- Expanding perceptions of what is possible

- Generating support for proposed developments of new playgrounds and for playground upgrades
- Encouraging community discussions and debate
- The extent of community consultation required on any given project will vary depending upon several factors including:
 - The playground hierarchy
 - The location of the development
 - The budget

Council will use its online consultation hub 'Have Your Say' on its website as part of its engagement strategy where the general public will be able to comment on what they would like to see included in new playgrounds. Community consultation will be conducted by Council when a new playground is being installed or an existing one is being renewed.

3.10 Softfall

Council uses the Australian standard AS/NZS 4422 Playground surfacing – Specifications, requirements and test method to guide the management of softfall. The purpose of this standard is to reduce injuries by defining the type and depth of surfacing required to achieve the necessary energy attenuation (impact absorption).

Certified softfall surfaces come in a range of natural surfaces including varying grades of wood chips and artificial surfaces such as rubber. The installer shall use the most appropriate type of under-surfacing for the playground site, taking into account the topography, potential for drainage issues, needs for inclusive access, level and frequency of use and the prescribed maintenance period and available budget.

Hard surfaces should only be used for the provision of access, e.g. pathways, areas for ballgames, for wheeled toy areas (cycle ways) and decorative purposes. Despite the benefits of synthetic rubber softfall it should only be considered for inclusion at Regional Playgrounds as it is expensive to install and has a useful life of only 10 years in high wear areas.

The current playground network includes a variety of softfall types and edging. Wood chip/natural mulch is the predominant type of softfall used in the playgrounds, typically with recycled plastic edging or concrete path style borders. Wet pour rubber has more recently been included in high use/wear areas which reduces the maintenance requirements of the mulch style areas. Wet pour rubber will continue to be used in new equipment installations particularly where fall injuries are more likely to occur.



Fig 2.7 Recycled plastic playground edging with natural mulch softfall

3.11 Shade and Sun Protection

Greater Southern Area Health Service state that “the melanoma age-specific incidence rate in Australia are the highest in the world which is largely attributed to elevated levels of ultraviolet (UV) radiation combined with a high proportion of the nation having sensitive skin”.

It is recognised that “Local Government should ensure that the issue of playground shade is comprehensively addressed in all relevant planning and policy documents so that it becomes an increased priority when developing and upgrading parks and playgrounds” (Anderson, 2014).

Provision should be made in all playgrounds for at least partial sun protection for both users of the play equipment and caregivers. This may be achieved in a number of ways, as listed below. It is not considered appropriate to shade entire areas as the users will require sunlight in the cooler months.

Council will use trees as a primary shade option. The following shall be considered when using trees for shade in a play space:

- Where appropriate, locate new playgrounds to the east side of existing, mature shade trees.
- Using advanced trees for those existing playgrounds that lack appropriate shade
- Tree planting in play spaces are to be treated with priority
- Tree species selected should be appropriate for the location
- Select trees that also provide other environmental benefits including wind protection, habitat for local fauna and improvement to the visual amenity of the area
- Use tree species that will be a minimal hindrance to passive surveillance
- Trees must be guarded to increase their protection against vandalism

Constructing purpose built shade structures over the equipment or erecting shelters adjacent to equipment is the secondary provision of shade. The provision of artificial shade is expensive with long term ongoing maintenance issues. Shade structures should only be considered in areas where the planting of mature trees is not practicable and where there is good passive surveillance and/or adequate supervision as they are prone to misuse and vandalism.

3.12 Fencing

Leeton LGA currently has no fully fenced playgrounds. Some of Council's current playgrounds have some fencing and are contained in a secure location but are not exclusively fenced. While fencing does provide a degree of safety and amenity, consideration needs to be given before installing fencing as to the location of the playground. This will include a risk assessment of the site and proposed play space design. Generally fencing will not be installed at a local playground because of the lower use and usually located in quiet residential areas and have smaller budgets which do not make it possible to install fencing.

Pending a risk assessment, fencing may be necessary in areas where there is a potential conflict between children using the playground and other activities associated with the playground. Examples are: the playground is located close to a busy road; is near a body of water; near other activities (sporting field); there is a demand for a dedicated enclosure for children or families (play area for toddlers).

If providing fencing, it is important to ensure that the type of fence is both attractive and suitable for the specific play space. Its design should allow for passive surveillance by neighbours and others.

Careful landscaping through the use of natural features such as mounds, rocks and plantings can be used as an alternative to manufactured fencing. If this is to be constructed consideration must be given to ensure the line of sight for supervision purposes is not obstructed.

3.13 Minimising Maintenance by Design

In order to minimise the impact of ongoing maintenance, Council will ensure sound design principles are implemented when new playgrounds and play spaces are constructed. An example is constructing softfall at ground level with subsurface drainage. This reduces the amount of maintenance required to keep the softfall at the correct level compared to above ground softfall.

Regular maintenance of loose softfall, including raking and maintenance of required depths is an important however time consuming task. The impact of this issue can be minimised through the well planned use of rubber softfall material pads. High usage areas including under swings, spinning elements and high traffic areas are considered appropriate locations for this treatment.

Shade sails are an expensive item to maintain as they are a common target for vandalism. It is common for holes to occur in shade sails from slashing or burning. Shade sails are also a high wear item because of deterioration due to wind and ultra violet. For this reason trees are recommended as the shade solution over shade sails where possible.

Selection of material types for playground equipment is important for managing graffiti. Materials with a rough surface such as some recycled plastics can be very difficult to clean as the graffiti paint is near impossible to remove. Other common types of vandalism in some areas of Leeton is burning of equipment and breaking smaller components. When developing playgrounds in suburbs where vandalism readily occurs, robust equipment needs to be selected.

Section 4 – Playground Asset Management

4.1 Asset Management

Council maintains its playgrounds in accordance with the Parks, Playgrounds & Recreational Facilities Maintenance Management Policy. In accordance with the policy all playgrounds are inspected monthly and routine maintenance scheduled following the inspections. In the development of this strategy a full audit of the playground network was undertaken and the following factors considered:

- Functionality – Does the playground fulfil the level of service desired by the users?
- Aesthetics – How does the playground look?
- Obsolescence – Is the playground dated?
- Utilisation – How often is the playground used?
- Softfall – What condition is the under surface soft fall in?

Results from the audit are presented in Section 2, figure 2.1 and have been used along with age of facilities data for the renewal plan and recommendations.

The underlying principle in Asset Management is Life Cycle Cost Analysis. It is important when assessing sustainability because this analysis includes both capital expenses

considered for a new asset, and the perpetual maintenance costs to keep the asset in a usable condition.

Table 4.1 – Playground Useful Lives and Unit Rates used for Asset Management

Playgrounds				
Description	Life (Years)	Unit	Av. Cost/Unit	Comment
Local Minor Renewal	25	Each	\$30,000	When possible, it is planned that local minor playground be refurbished and then 10 years later renewed
Refurbishment	15		\$20,000	
Local Major Renewal	25	Each	\$50,000	When possible, it is planned that Local Major playgrounds be refurbished and then 10 years later renewed
Refurbishment	15		\$30,000	
Suburban Renewal	25	Each	\$100,000	When possible, it is planned that Suburban playgrounds be refurbished and then 10 years later renewed
Refurbishment	15		\$50,000	
District Renewal	25	Each	\$150,000	When possible, it is planned that District playgrounds be refurbished and then 10 years later renewed
Refurbishment	15		\$80,000	
Playground edging options				
Description	Life (Years)	Unit	Av. Cost/Unit	Comment
Treated Pine Sleepers	10 Years	Per/M	\$40	Used as a landscaping feature or a part of a theme
Concrete Block	30 Years	Per/M	\$80	Used generally for enhanced landscapes or where retaining walls are required
Concrete path	30 Years	Per/M (1200mm)	\$70	Used as a border where a path is required or where fencing installations occur
Recycled plastic	40 Years	Per/M	\$45	The most cost effective and widely used edging material
Softfall Materials				
Description	Life	Unit	Cost/Unit	Comment
Wood chip mulch	5-10 Years	M3	\$60	Stockpiled at LSC depot and regularly used to top up existing softfall areas
Wetpour rubber surfacing	10-15 Years	M2	\$120	Used in high wear/risk areas to minimise risk of injury and reduce maintenance requirements of softfall mulch

Renewing and refurbishing playgrounds based on their asset condition assessments, results in different amounts of funding being required each year. For example when a district playground requires renewal or refurbishment compared to a local minor playground significantly different funding is required. One option to allow for this variation is to develop a reserve so unspent funds in years with smaller programs can be saved for when larger budgets are required.

Whilst the average life expectancy of playgrounds is 20-25 years, playgrounds will not be automatically renewed. Renewals will only occur when the asset condition warrants the renewal.

Different playgrounds, constructed of different materials and by different manufacturers, age at different rates. Proper routine inspection and maintenance can extend the life of equipment for longer than expected.

For example, whole sections of the standardised steel bracket and post type equipment currently widely used by Council, can often be removed, reconditioned and re-installed as part of an upgrade. This aids in the reduction of capital upgrade costs and effectively extends the lifespan of the equipment. However, while this is the type of standardised equipment that is proposed to be most commonly used on local scale playgrounds, a drawback of its wider application is that it is more difficult to achieve diverse, good quality, play outcomes.

Conversely, providing more diverse, individually designed and interesting play experiences in neighbourhood and district type playgrounds often involves the utilisation of different design approaches, construction techniques and materials used, some of which may have a lesser life expectancy.

Table 4.2 the below table identifies the capital renewal costs of implementing the above recommendations listed in Section 5.

Playground Capital Renewal Costs Over The Life Of The Plan		
	Unit Rate	
Playground Type	Costs (Incl. equipment plus supporting infrastructure)	
Local Minor Refurbishment	\$20,000	
Local Minor Renewal	\$30,000	
Local Major Refurbishment	\$30,000	
Local Major Renewal	\$30,000	
Suburban Refurbishment	\$50,000	
Suburban Renewal	\$100,000	
District Refurbishment	\$80,000	
District Renewal	\$150,000	
Results	Current Renewal Program (15 Years)	Proposed Renewal Program (15 Years)
Total renewal costs over the life of the plan	\$764,000	\$1,012,000
Useful Life	20 -25	20 -25
Average CAPEX per year	\$50,900	\$67,466
Total increase		\$248,000
Average Yearly increase		\$14,433
Total % increase		32 %

The maintenance costs of implementing this strategy are shown in Figure 4.3 below. Implementing this strategy will require an initial investment of approximately \$5000, bringing the required maintenance expenditure for the 2017/18 year to \$34,600. This increase is due to this strategy providing an increased level of service to the public through increased inspection frequency of playgrounds for vandalism and graffiti, as well as monitoring performance of new materials, such as wet pour rubber for softfall areas and recycled plastics for edging and play equipment. More frequent minor replacement or repair of damaged equipment and supporting infrastructure will also be undertaken to help achieve expected equipment lifecycles.

Figure 4.3 Maintenance Costs

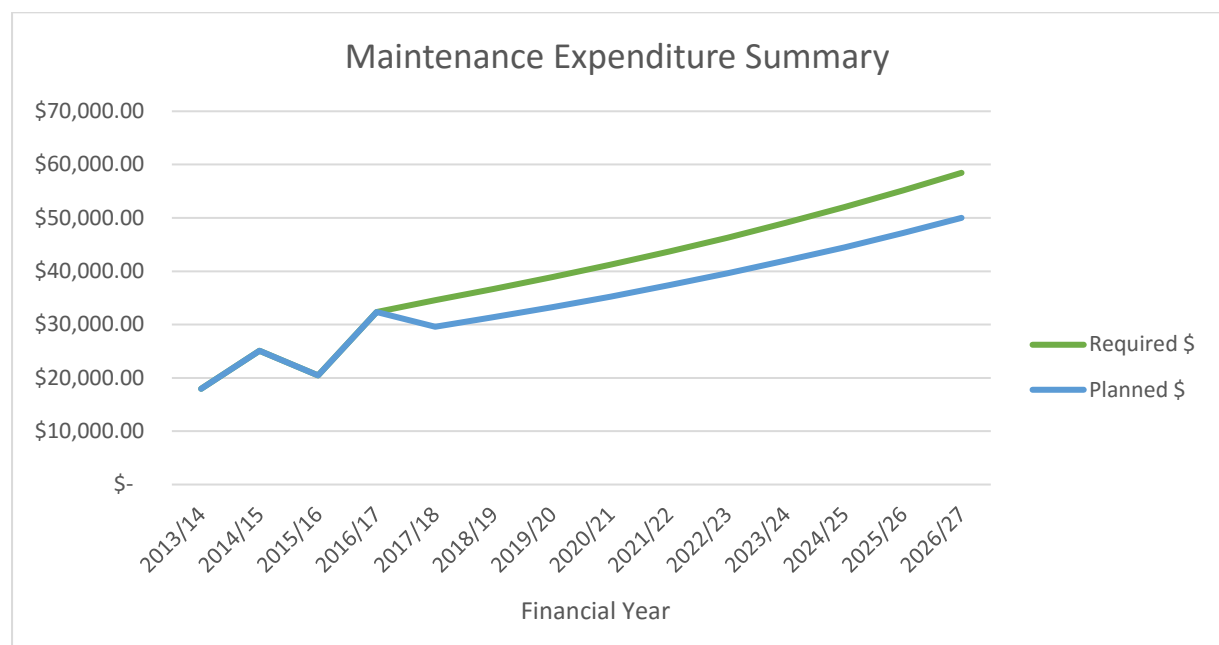


Table 5.1 Proposed Action Plan

Priority	Location	Proposed Classification	Comments	Recommended Items	Estimate	Budget Year
1	Wamoon Park	Suburban	Council has received a petition and several letters requesting additional items be added to the playground at Wamoon. Toilets and a BBQ are amongst the items listed in the request. The playground equipment is basic and should be enhanced further. (It is proposed that toilets be funded via the Wamoon Sewer System Project)	Additional Equipment BBQ Toilets Shelter/seating (Toilets funded from Wamoon Sewer Project)	\$44,000	2017/18
2	Waipukarau Park	Suburban	Waipukarau is somewhat isolated from the rest of the Leeton Shire playground network. Council has received many requests for the development of a new playground facility at this location. The new facility would be constructed closer to Seville Street side of the park away from the drain and busy Brady Way and also where passive surveillance will be more effective. (The open drain in Waipukarau Park should be closed in as a matter of priority for safety purposes. Funding to come from the storm water drainage reserve)	Renewal of existing playground BBQ Shelter Seating	\$100,000 (Grant funding opportunities to be explored)	2018/19
3	Golf Club Estate	Local Major	The Golf Course Estate has open space dedicated for use as a playground but as yet no development has been undertaken. The subdivision is remote from any other playgrounds and should be developed as a Local Major playground facility. There is scope to landscape the existing detention basin with tree plantings as well to create a larger usable open space.	New Park/Playground Tree plantings Irrigation Turf Seating	\$150,000 (Grant funding opportunities to be explored)	2019/20
4	Noel Pulbrook Park	Local Minor	Replace existing equipment with new similar equipment	Renewal of existing equipment	\$30,000	2020/21
5	Enticknap Park	Local Minor	Replace slide and swings and relocate into one single area	Renewal of existing equipment	\$30,000	2020/21

6	Ramponi Park	Local Minor	Replace slide and relocate to swing area. Retain existing swings.	Renewal of slide with small slide combination	\$20,000	2021/22
7	Waring Park	Local Minor	Equipment in poor condition and spread out throughout the park. Consolidate and replace all existing equipment into one location.	Renewal of existing equipment	\$30,000	2021/22
8	Graham Park	District Park	<p>Graham Park is one of the most popular parks in the Leeton Shire. Many formal gathering are held there with the location very popular for birthday parties and other organised events. The playground lacks some equipment for the older age group and would benefit from some high impact equipment like a large climbing net structure or themed tower with multiple attachments. Shade sails to be provided over the junior equipment area that will be fenced in 2017/18. The provision of some accessible all abilities play equipment would be a good addition to this playground.</p> <p>Formal carpark to be constructed along Quandong Street including disability car park space. Path from new carpark to link seating area and toilets (when funding becomes available)</p>	<p>Additional equipment (Climbing net/tower slide) & shade sails</p> <p>Fencing of junior area</p> <p>Water station</p> <p>Shade over toddlers Playground (Rotary Project)</p> <p>All abilities playground</p>	<p>\$70,000</p> <p>\$16,000</p> <p>\$4,000</p> <p>\$20,000</p> <p>\$50,000 (grant funded)</p>	<p>2022/23</p> <p>2017/18</p> <p>2017/18</p> <p>2017/18</p> <p>(when funding available)</p>
9	McCaughey Park	District Park	<p>McCaughey Park is well serviced but would benefit from an expansion to include a new major piece of equipment like a themed tower slide or some larger themed modular equipment as well as some spring rockers.</p> <p>Council resolved to investigate options and costs for a simple water play feature.</p>	<p>Tower slide/climbing net combination</p> <p>Spring rockers</p> <p>Water station</p> <p>Water play feature</p>	<p>\$70,000</p> <p>\$4,000</p> <p>(TBD)</p>	<p>2023/24</p> <p>2018/19</p>
10	Mountford Park	District Park	Mountford Park is the premier park in the Leeton Shire area. It is very well serviced and is by far the most popular and frequently used. The modular play equipment will require replacement by 2023/24 and a much larger multi age themed piece should be included.	<p>Themed all age modular play structure</p> <p>Water station</p>	<p>\$100,000</p> <p>\$4,000</p>	<p>2024/25</p> <p>2017/18</p>

11	Gossamer Park	Suburban	Gossamer Park received new equipment as part of a grant program in 2017. The original modular play structure is old and will require replacing.	Refurbishment of modular play structure	\$50,000	2025/26
12	Central Park	Suburban	Well serviced playground. Additional equipment & minor refurbishment required.	Additional equipment & minor refurbishment	\$50,000	2026/27
13	Whitton Park	Suburban	Well serviced playground. Additional equipment and minor refurbishment required.	Additional equipment & refurbishment	\$50,000	2027/28
14	Murrumbidgee	Suburban	Renewal and replacement of some equipment will be required.	Refurbishment	\$50,000	2028/29
15	Wiradjuri Playground	Local Major	Renewal and replacement of some equipment will be required.	Refurbishment	\$30,000	2029/30
16	Wandoo Playground	Local Major	Renewal and replacement of some equipment will be required.	Refurbishment	\$30,000	2030/31
17	Leeton Ovals Complex	Local Major	Renewal and replacement of some equipment will be required.	Refurbishment	\$30,000	2031/32
					\$1,012,000	15 Years

Proposed Upgrade Summary

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Date of Adoption/Amendment	Resolution Number
Adopted 25 October 2017	17/098