

# PLAY SPACE DESIGN GUIDELINES AND CHECKLIST

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

The design guidelines assist in designing play spaces that meet our guiding principles. It is recommended the checklist be completed by officers and / or developers to document how the design guidelines have been considered and applied when developing new or refurbishing play spaces in Palmerston.

Resources to support the design guidelines are safer design guidelines which increase usage of public places, achieve connection and integration of streets and public places, reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour and create more liveable environments. The NT Government Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles provide a framework for this. The Northern Territory Subdivision Development Guidelines 2020, sets out requirements for new development as well as the layout, design and construction of infrastructure including open space and landscaping.



Guideline	Items to consider	How the design will respond to the guidelines
<b>1. Access and Inclusion</b>		
<b>1.1</b> Provide well connected, accessible and inclusive play spaces for a variety of abilities and ages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure play space design and planning includes universal access to all key features and facilities.</li> <li>• Refer to the NSW Government Everyone Can Play Guidelines when designing new or upgraded play spaces.</li> <li>• Consider using existing and planned pedestrian and cycle networks when planning for play space locations and distribution throughout Palmerston.</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Aesthetic appeal</b>		
<b>2.1</b> Design play spaces that enhance the overall visual appeal of existing parks and complement the key site features of the space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use play elements and materials that reflect and complement the sense of place of the park and immediate surrounds.</li> <li>• Integrate play space layout and equipment with existing trees, gardens, topography, views, cultural items and other key site features.</li> <li>• Focus bespoke and custom design play features in major and regional play spaces</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Distribution across Palmerston</b>		
<b>3.1</b> The distribution of play spaces within the existing and planned open space network will respond to specific facility gaps and target user needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise the upgrade and renewal of existing play spaces to address compliance issues and improve play experiences before the creation of new sites.</li> <li>• The development of play spaces in new residential suburbs are to be in accordance with the Northern Territory Government Planning Scheme and Subdivision Guidelines. Generally, play spaces are to be located within 400 to 500m walking distance to a local play space, 5 to 10 minute drive to major play spaces, and 15 to 20 minute drive to regional play spaces.</li> </ul>	



Guideline	Items to consider	How the design will respond to the guidelines
<p><b>4. Diversity and Age Appropriate Play</b></p>		
<p><b>4.1</b> Provide play spaces throughout Palmerston specifically catering for the needs of young people in the 13 to 18 years age group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure play space design targeting older age groups incorporate an appropriate level of risk, challenge and adventure for individual development.</li> <li>• Include facilities and infrastructure that supports social gatherings and informal physical activity.</li> <li>• Play space planning, design and distribution targeting young people needs to consider;                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proximity to public transport and cycleway networks</li> <li>- Proximity to schools and shops</li> <li>- Size to accommodate multiple facilities and activities</li> <li>- Opportunities for casual surveillance.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>4.2</b> Play spaces will provide diversity of play experiences for a range of age groups, abilities and backgrounds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When planning and designing new or upgraded play spaces, undertake an assessment of nearby available play equipment and experiences to minimise duplication and maximise variety, including age appropriate play, risk and challenges.</li> <li>• Develop site specific play space designs that maximise the site's key attributes in regards to integrating nature-based play experiences.</li> <li>• Consider culturally appropriate design responses within play spaces by engaging with the local community during the early design and planning phases.</li> <li>• Play spaces shall be designed for the different developmental stages of children and adults and consider items such as;                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Physical size</li> <li>- Physical ability</li> <li>- Skills</li> <li>- Behavior</li> <li>- Play and activity interests</li> <li>- Ability to understand risk and dangers.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



Guideline	Items to consider	How the design will respond to the guidelines
<b>5. Landscape and Nature</b>		
<p>Connecting people with nature through play space design and encouragement of nature-based play.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site specific play space designs will have physical and visual connections to natural areas and incorporate play elements safely amongst the trees and gardens.</li> <li>• Nature based play experiences using custom designed equipment and natural elements such as rocks, flowing water, trees, and sand shall be encouraged in suitable existing and new play spaces where appropriate.</li> <li>• Play spaces will be sited to take advantage of existing landscape features and spatial arrangements of the parks such as positioning playgrounds near open kickabout areas, bushland and under the shade of trees. Suggested minimum distance between playgrounds and trees is 4 metres. Tree protection zones should also be considered when placing equipment.</li> </ul>	
<b>6. Climate Change and Heat Mitigation</b>		
<p><b>6.1</b> Play space design will acknowledge expected increased temperatures and have spaces that are appealing, comfortable and address heat impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase tree planting and landscaping to reduce heat impacts.</li> <li>• Ensure a proportion of managed grass areas around the play spaces are irrigated during the dry season, to provide cool and comfortable places to relax.</li> <li>• Explore opportunities to incorporate water play and wet-misters in selected Major and Regional play spaces.</li> <li>• Design shade structures that maximise shade during different times of the day</li> </ul>	



<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Items to consider</b>	<b>How the design will respond to the guidelines</b>
<b>7. Safety and Risk</b>		
<p><b>7.1</b> Provide a safe element of risk in the play spaces to encourage the challenging of physical limits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate an appropriate level of risk and adventurous play through the equipment and general layout of the play space that challenges individual child development.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>7.2</b> Adopt best practice safety and design standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all upgraded and new play spaces meet the requirements of the relevant Australian Standards.</li> <li>• Certification of the design and completed constructed play space is to be undertaken by a suitably qualified professional.</li> <li>• Adopt the Safer by Design safety principles in the positioning and general arrangement of new and upgraded play spaces.</li> <li>• Existing mature trees in the vicinity of the play spaces to be regularly monitored to assess any potential safety issues in relation to limb drop, tree structure and stability.</li> </ul>	
<b>8. Sustainability</b>		
<p><b>8.1</b> Play spaces will consider the environmental and economical impact to ensure they are sustainable in the short and long term.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the environmental impact of play equipment at the planning and design stage of the play space.</li> <li>• Source certified environmentally sustainable products and materials.</li> <li>• Play space designs will minimise maintenance requirements where possible by;                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- limiting and focusing areas of irrigated, managed lawns to areas directly adjacent to the play space.</li> <li>- Replace large expanses of passive use irrigated grass areas with drylands grass, irrigated trees, native planting and gardens (where appropriate)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



Guideline	Items to consider	How the design will respond to the guidelines
<b>9. Softfall Surfaces</b>		
<b>9.1</b> Choice of play space softfall surfaces will be fit for purpose and selected based on a set of design criteria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design considerations when selecting the softfall material and the general arrangement need to include play space hierarchy, levels of use, characteristics of the surrounding area, climatic conditions, cost, mobility access and ongoing maintenance.</li> <li>• Ensure upgraded and new play spaces install softfall in accordance with applicable Australian Standards and regulations.</li> <li>• Rubber softfall should be installed in play spaces with sand considered where appropriate for the specific play opportunity</li> </ul>	
<b>10. Shade</b>		
<b>10.1</b> Provide shade for general comfort, amenity and to promote longer use of the play space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install shade structures that are engineered to withstand cyclonic conditions in new and upgraded play spaces that offer shade for extended periods of the day.</li> <li>• Install shelter for amenities that offer protection for extended periods of the day.</li> <li>• Undertake shade tree planting to complement constructed shade structures in all play spaces where existing trees don't occur.</li> <li>• Retain as much natural vegetation and bushland as possible, incorporating mature trees into the design of play spaces.</li> </ul>	

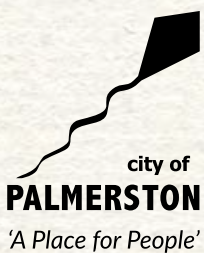


Guideline	Items to consider	How the design will respond to the guidelines
<b>11. Park Furniture</b>		
<p><b>11.1</b> Park furniture shall be provided to support the use of play spaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Park furniture should be appropriately designed and installed, including path connections and hard surfaces under high use areas.</li> <li>• Site specific design and planning of existing play spaces to determine the appropriate placement and location of park furniture that responds to the character, topography and landscape of each site, should be undertaken to maximise opportunities for surveillance and activation of the space.</li> <li>• Drinking fountains shall be located 10m from the water mainline to reduce standing water issues in pipes.</li> <li>• Park furniture shall be constructed from robust materials that are readily available for replacement. Only Major and Regional play space should consider bespoke park furniture.</li> </ul>	
<b>12. Public Art</b>		
<p><b>12.1</b> Opportunities to creatively incorporate public art in the play space will be explored.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore options to include functional public art elements at the planning and design stage of new and upgraded Major and Regional play spaces. The art installations will enhance the play experience, respond to the local environment, engage the community and/or express cultural identity.</li> <li>• Public art will be planned and procured in accordance with Council's Public Art Strategy.</li> <li>• Public art is not be an 'add on' at the end of the design and construction process. It will be fully planned, budgeted and integrated into the design of the play space.</li> </ul>	



Guideline	Items to consider	How the design will respond to the guidelines
<b>13. Fencing</b>		
<b>13.1</b> Play spaces will be fenced in response to site specific conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fencing around playgrounds will be considered to address safety issues where other design options are not appropriate.</li> <li>• Where fencing is required, alternative forms of fencing to be investigated and the following items to be considered;             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fenced playgrounds limit the points of access to play facilities and reduces opportunities for connection between the playground and surrounding, complementary activity elements / spaces.</li> <li>- Fences have a visual impact and is at odds with the idea of 'open space'.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>14. Signage</b>		
<b>14.1</b> Signage installed to display the park name and to identify cultural elements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply Council standard for Park signage to ensure consistency of messaging.</li> <li>• Cultural signage to be approved by Council communications officers.</li> </ul>	
<b>15. Lighting</b>		
Lighting extends play and access to exercise equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install solar park lighting along main paths in play spaces.</li> <li>• Install sufficient lighting to illuminate play and exercise equipment.</li> <li>• Ensure there are timers installed for the play and exercise equipment to be turned off at a set time.</li> </ul>	





Civic Plaza, 1 Chung Wah Terrace,  
Palmerston, NT 0830

P 08 8935 9922

E [palmerston@palmerston.nt.gov.au](mailto:palmerston@palmerston.nt.gov.au)

**PALMERSTON.NT.GOV.AU**