UNIVERSAL DESIGN
FOR PLAYSPACES

CITY OF CHARLES STURT

06 August 2025

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OUR COMMUNITY VISION:
ALIGNMENT TO THE FIVE CONNECTING THEMES

The City of Charles Sturt's Community Vision has played a key role in shaping the development of an inclusive and accessible playspace design checklist for landscape architects. In particular, the five connecting themes have guided the checklist's focus on fostering social connection, enhancing usability for all, and ensuring sustainable, nature-integrated design solutions.



Local Neighbourhood Outcomes

- Our families, friends and neighbours create memories together.
- Our local businesses know your name.
- Our neighbourhoods enable us to walk or ride to get what we need.
- Our places appreciate and reflect their local history and culture.
- We create local connection within and between neighbourhoods.



Connecting and Belonging Outcomes

- Our communities have a voice and feel respected and valued.
- Our community have access to spaces, services and support when needed.
- We create opportunities for communities to collaborate, engage and connect.
- Our City is a place where everyone can be healthy and safe.
- We support and value diversity.



Our Transforming City Outcomes

- We respect our heritage as we transform.
- We support diverse housing and infrastructure for our evolving communities.
- Our City is resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- Our City is prosperous, diverse and supported by innovative businesses with a variety of employment opportunities.



Valuing Nature Outcomes

- Our City is cool, green and filled with life.
- Our beaches, open spaces and waterways invite reflection and wellbeing.
- We work together with our community to protect our environment.



Vibrant Places Outcomes

- Our spaces are unique, creative, interesting and engaging.
- Our city is recognised as a centre for sport, events and for bringing people together.
- Our businesses contribute to the vibe of the destination.

OPEN SPACE STRATEGY:
HIERARCHY OF RESERVES

Definitions for playgrounds are provided below to assist in future planning and development.

Hierarchy Framework Definitions

Hierarchy	Definition	Provision	Playground Features	Other Facilities
Regional	A regional playground should have the potential to attract and benefit people from across and beyond the City due to its uniqueness, innovation, quality, size, location or other key features. A regional playground could include a number of pieces of equipment and cover a large footprint, or it could be smaller where the regional value is due to its location, quality and the unique character of the equipment or broader playspace setting.	Regional playgrounds should be located in high profile and larger reserves that already attract large numbers of users. Generally regional playgrounds should be located in regional parks.	Regional playgrounds should include 'all abilities' components and cater for a range of age groups and abilities (including children with a disability). A particular emphasis should be placed on including unique and innovative play equipment and integrating landscape (nature) and art work to create a distinctive and highly appealing play destination.	Regional playgrounds should include toilets (ideally accessible to people with a disability), car parking, shelters, seating, picnic settings, pathways, lighting, drinking water and other features. The emphasis should be on creating an appealing family and children oriented space and supporting lengthy stays (a morning, afternoon or early evening) with opportunity for meals and social gatherings.
District	A district playground should have the potential to attract and benefit people from across a number of Planning Precincts. The playground should be good quality, creative, unique and well located, but may not be as substantial as a regional playground (in relation to size, quality or innovation).	District playgrounds should be linked to district and regional parks that are already well used and justify a quality play experience.	District playgrounds should aim to cater for various age groups and some could be designed to cater for 'all abilities' (including children with a disability). The play equipment and landscape should be very good quality and innovative, with the aim to create a unique and appealing play experience.	District playgrounds should include or be connected to infrastructure that supports community activity. In particular, seating, shelter, picnic settings, pathways and drinking water should be provided.
Neighbourhood	A neighbourhood playground will cater for a Planning Precinct or a number of suburbs and be good quality with a number of equipment pieces. Some neighbourhood playgrounds will justify being higher quality and more innovative than a usual neighbourhood playground. The aim of a higher level neighbourhood playground is to provide a local destination that people can walk to and easily access.	Neighbourhood playgrounds will generally be located in neighbourhood parks. Some district parks may only justify a higher level neighbourhood playground.	Neighbourhood playgrounds could be basic in character but sturdy and good quality. A higher level neighbourhood playground should include unique features that broaden the play value, e.g. some unique pieces of equipment, appealing landscape.	The infrastructure linked to a neighbourhood playground could be limited to seating natural shade and paths. Additional infrastructure will be justified for a higher level neighbourhood playground such as tables and benches, shelter and drinking water.
Local	A local playground will cater for a local area and could be small and relatively basic.	Local playgrounds will be provided to support play where it is not appropriate to have a higher level playground. Local playgrounds will generally be located in local parks.	Local playgrounds could be basic in character and relatively small (potentially with only a few pieces of equipment).	The infrastructure will be limited although seating should be provided with natural shade.

CHECKLIST FOR DESIGN:

01 CAN I GET THERE?

CHECKLIST FOR DESIGN:
CAN I GET THERE?

The City of Charles Sturt envisions playgrounds that are inclusive, accessible, and enjoyable for all, fostering connection, creativity, and well-being. By embedding universal design principles, we will create play spaces that accommodate diverse needs, ensuring equitable and enriching experiences for every community member.

Note: Refer to page 18 for Junior playground concept plan. Where there is an alphabet reference in the below table, please refer to the legend of the Junior concept plans. Refer to page 20 for Senior playground concept plan. Where there is a number reference in the below table, please refer to the legend of the Senior concept plans.

Project Name: Croydon Playground Reserve

Project Address: Day Terrace, Croydon SA 5008

Level Classification: Higher Neighbourhood

Location, Layout, Signage, Wayfinding, and Accessibility to ensure everyone can find their way to, in and around the playspace.

Location

	Yes, Existing	Yes, Change Required	No,	Because of...
Information about the playspace is available before I go (i.e. information about location, accessibility features, and amenities).	✓			Information is available on the City of Charles Sturt's website
On-street car parking is available.	✓			Street parking is existing.
Car parking is easily available and close to the playspace (i.e. off street car parking) with accessible car parking bays are provided (Regional Only).			✓	Reserve is Higher Neighbourhood classification.
The playspace's access point can be used easily and comfortably (i.e. unsignalised intersections, kerbs, streets without footpaths or pram ramps).	✓			Footpaths to the playground are existing.
The playspace's orientation and position utilises its unique features, including views, existing vegetation (shade and amenity), topography (embankment play) and passive surveillance.		✓		New design will consider unique features.
The playspace is connected to a path network.		✓		Playspace will connect to the current path network.
The playspace is located away from residential boundaries and roadway edges where possible.	✓			There is an existing fence to the road and train line. Refer I and 9.
The local Indigenous history has been researched and is recognised.			✓	Out of scope.
The history of the site is considered.			✓	Out of scope.

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CAN I GET THERE?

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Layout

	Yes, Existing	Yes, Change Required	No,	Because of...
The playspace has signage or a map to aid navigation (Regional, District, Neighbourhood Only).			✓	Out of scope.
There are pause points at the entry and exit to view and assess play opportunities on arrival. The points of entry and exit are easy to locate from inside and outside the playspace.	✓			Path leading to the playspace allows for pause points.
The formal entry zone provides a sense of welcome to the site.	✓			The formal entry zone provides a sense of welcome.
Formal and informal seating is provided in appropriate locations (e.g. at regular intervals – every 30-50m, near shade, adjacent to activity areas). Seating is positioned for caregivers to supervise children easily.		✓		Informal seating will be added. Refer 4-5; C. Formal seating is existing, however, in some cases not connected to the path network. Refer 6-7; F-G.
Play equipment for different age groups is grouped together without being separated from the main area of activity.	✓			Playgrounds are separated based on age range use.

Signage/Wayfinding

	Yes, Existing	Yes, Change Required	No,	Because of...
The use of wayfinding is appropriate for the hierarchy or usage of the playspace (Regional, District, Neighbourhood).			✓	Out of scope.
Signage is easy to read, using simple language, graphics and high colour contrast with non-reflective materials. Text, images, symbols and Braille are provided on key instructional and safety signage for different literacy and language levels (Regional, District, Neighbourhood Only).			✓	Out of scope.
Signage is located at strategic points to assist with navigation and decision-making (e.g. entry points and along activity trails), and at a height that is easy to read for all users, including children, those in wheelchairs and standing adults (Regional, District, Neighbourhood Only).			✓	Out of scope.
There is a clear path network hierarchy (i.e. easy to distinguish between main orientation path, circulation paths and play paths).		✓		Currently, there are no paths within the playspace.
There is intuitive wayfinding with clear paths and open sightlines. There is an appropriate colour contrast between the paths and the play surfaces.		✓		All new equipment (except for the train) and new paths will be included to the main play structures. Refer 1, 3; A, D.
There is adequate pathway lighting for night navigation (Regional Only).			✓	Reserve is a Higher Neighbourhood classification only.

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CAN I GET THERE?

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Access

	Yes, Existing	Yes, Change Required	No,	Because of...
There are flush transition points to allow for smooth access between paths and play surfaces.		✓		New paths/edging etc. will be included.
There is a primary path linking to, in and around the playspace that links to access points and key activity areas. It connects directly to all access points. The primary path is clearly identifiable. The primary path is also the accessible path, it has a consistent width and surface finish. It conforms to relevant Australian access standards.		✓		Currently, there are no paths within the playspace.
Most elements are connected to a circulation path within the playspace, which has a consistent width and surface finish.		✓		Currently, there are no paths within the playspace.
Design edges have detectable warnings for visually impaired users.		✓		Edges within the playspace will be new.
The site's topography does not create an obstacle or barrier for access (e.g. steep slope with no footpath, stair-only access).		✓		Currently, there is a large step down into the junior play area that could be considered unsafe.
Ramps are used to overcome any topography barriers. Ramps and paths comply with AS1428.		✓		A ramp will be used to overcome the above issue. It will be compliant. Refer H.

Fencing

	Yes, Existing	Yes, Change Required	No,	Because of...
The playspace is protected from adjacent potential risks/hazards/activities (i.e. busy roads, open water bodies) through formal or informal enclosures (fence, gate, landform, planting, rocks).	✓			There is an existing fence to the road and train line.
Access gates are easy to open with one hand, and can be operated by an adult using a wheelchair or mobility device.	✓			The gates are easy to open.
Access gates are at least 1m wide (wide enough for a wheelchair user to access).	✓			The gates are least 1m wide.
There is a single, accessible entrance for all users.		✓		Currently, there is no accessible entrance into the playspace.

CHECKLIST FOR DESIGN:

02 CAN I PLAY?

CHECKLIST FOR DESIGN:
CAN I PLAY?

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The playspace, equipment and surfacing should allow everyone to experience a variety of challenging and engaging play opportunities in a way that suits them.

Types of Play	Yes, Existing	Yes, Change Required	No,	Because of...
Varied play types are provided.		✓		All equipment will be renewed, except for the train.
Sensory play is considered in the design (i.e. all senses can be engaged):				
Sight		✓		Due to budget restraints, sound and edible elements are unable to be included.
Sound			✓	
Touch		✓		Sensory play will be incorporated through sight, touch and smell. There will be stepper paths with different textures along the path. Refer 4-5; C.
Smell		✓		
Taste			✓	
Active play items are considered:				
Climbing		✓		Climbing, balancing, hanging, swinging, sliding, rocking, jumping, and forts and towers elements were all requested by the public. Refer 1-4; A - D.
Balancing		✓		
Hanging		✓		
Running	✓			There is already space within the reserve for running.
Swinging		✓		
Spinning			✓	Spinning and flying equipment will not be included due to budget and because they were not in the top 5 play types requested. Additionally, the playground footprint is too small.
Sliding		✓		
Flying			✓	
Rocking		✓		Skating and bike riding is out of scope and was not requested.
Jumping		✓		
Forts and Towers		✓		
Bike Riding			✓	
Skating			✓	

CHECKLIST FOR DESIGN:
CAN I PLAY?

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Types of Play	Yes, Existing	Yes, Change Required	No,	Because of...
Cognitive play items are considered:				
Role play		✓		All equipment is being renewed, except for the train - new towers and activity cube will include challenging climbing elements for problem solving. Refer 1-2, A. The rockers and existing train will allow for role playing. Refer B and D. The playspace will include spaces for creation and construction.
Spaces for creation and construction – access to loose materials		✓		
Spaces for problem solving		✓		
Social play items are considered through encouraging interaction through:				
Group games		✓		All equipment is being renewed, except for the train - new towers is will have a "shop" for role play and group play. Refer 1 and A. The rockers and existing train will allow for role playing. Refer B and D.
Role play		✓		
Passive play spaces are considered:				
Quiet play areas		✓		The new playspace will include areas for retreat, particularly through the inclusion of a nature play zone. Refer 4-5, C.
Reading nooks		✓		
Sand play			✓	Sand play is out of scope.
Intergenerational play opportunities are considered:				
Seating nearby		✓		Informal seating will be added. Refer 4-5; C. Formal existing seating can be found in and nearby the playground. Refer 6-7; F-G.
Equipment for all ages		✓		
Accessible pathways		✓		Equipment for all ages, accessible paths, and play panels will all be included within the new play area. 1-4; A-D.
Play panels		✓		
Nature play elements are considered:				
Teepees			✓	
Bamboo forest			✓	A bamboo forest and teepee will not be included due to budget. Stepping stones/logs and balance logs will be included in the new play space. Refer 4-5; C.
Stepping stones/logs		✓		
Balance logs		✓		
Imagination play incorporated through tactile materials and surfaces (i.e. teepees, bamboo forest, stepping stones, balance logs, hills, mazes, cubbies, exploring and hiding etc.).		✓		Stepping stones/logs and balance logs will be included in the new play space. Refer 4-5; C.

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CAN I PLAY?

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Equipment	Yes, Existing	Yes, Change Required	No,	Because of...
Play equipment offerings in nearby playgrounds have been considered when choosing equipment.		✓		All equipment is being renewed, except for the train.
The equipment matches the theme of the playspace.		✓		All new equipment in the Junior Playspace will be in a Trains and Transport theme. All new equipment in the Senior Playspace will be in a Nature with a pop of colour theme.
Equipment is well connected. Everyone can access the main play piece and have meaningful play experiences.		✓		Paths will be added to access points of new towers and the basket swing. Refer 1, 3; A.
Equipment is multi-use and adaptable to encourage diverse ways to play. Equipment is challenging for multiple age groups and ability levels. There are a variety of multi-user equipment pieces.		✓		New equipment will encourage diverse ways of play.
Interactive elements with simple instructions are included (i.e. musical instruments, activity panels).		✓		Activity panels will be included. Refer A.
Play items for early childhood development are included (i.e. mobility, balance, coordination, motor skills, imagination play, cognition).		✓		Play elements for development will be included (steppers, balancing logs etc.). Refer 4-5; C.
Playground design for vision impairment has been considered (i.e. circular playground layout, play equipment selection, sensory based elements such as sensory paths, use of technology).		✓		Play elements for vision impairment will be included (play equipment selection). Refer 1-3; A-D.
Playground design for hearing impairments has been considered (i.e. communication panels, balance equipment, planted or structured screening to prevent excess background noise, sensory based elements such as sand, water, and musical elements where the vibration can be felt).		✓		Play elements for hearing impairment will be included (balance equipment). Refer 4-5; C.
There are a variety of swings (bucket seats, harness swings, group swings).		✓		There will be a variety of swings (bucket, junior and strap). Refer 3.
Technology is incorporated where possible.			✓	Out of scope.
Equipment selection, layout, and modifications are chosen in accordance with Australian Standards. Including ease of access, entrapment elimination and free height of fall zones.		✓		Playground will be done to Australian Standards.

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CAN I PLAY?

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Equipment

	Yes, Existing	Yes, Change Required	No,	Because of...
All-abilities play items are considered:				
All-abilities harness seat/flying fox or nest swing		✓		Basket swing will be included. Refer 3. Low level platforms will be included. Refer 1 and A. Proprietary panels will be included. Refer A. Mixed use informal seating will be included. Refer 4-5, C. Formal seating is located in and near the playground and in the playground. Refer 6-7, F-G.
Low level boardwalks/stages/platforms		✓		
Rotating items / merri-go-rounds / accessible carousel			✓	
Elevated sand trays for wheelchair access			✓	
Tactile panels with Braille and Auslan or pictures of non-verbal communication symbols			✓	
Proprietary panels - clock faces, tic-tac-toe, abacus, sensory panels, mirror etc.		✓		Spinning play items, music play, and larger rockers will not be included due to budget and size of playground.
Nest, hammock swing or mixed use seating		✓		
Ping pong tables			✓	
Double or larger style rockers			✓	Sand play, water play, tactile panels/ communication panels and ping pong tables are out of scope.
Musical equipment / sound tubes			✓	
Water, sand or mud play			✓	

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Play Experience

	Yes, Existing	Yes, Change Required	No,	Because of...
Playground classification has been considered in the playspace's design (i.e. local, neighbourhood, district, regional).		✓		Reserve is Higher Neighbourhood classification and this will be considered within the design.
There is a consistent theme within the playspace.		✓		Playground will have a consistent Trains and Transport theme (Junior) or Nature with a pop of colour theme (Senior).
Sensory-rich elements (scents, sounds, textures) to engage diverse abilities are used.		✓		Scented plants and a nature play trail will be incorporated in the design. Refer 4-5, C and E.
The playspace provides opportunities for a variety of age groups (e.g. toddlers, children, teenagers, adults).		✓		Play for all ages will be included.
Play items are provided for inclusion (i.e. they provide accessible spaces for people of all ages and abilities).		✓		Accessible play items will be included. Refer 1, 3; A, D.
Seating and shade are positioned directly adjacent play equipment to ensure carers can supervise, particularly if water play is being used.		✓		Existing trees will remain. Formal seating is located in and near the playground. Refer 6-7; F-G. Informal seating will be added. Refer 4-5; C.
Stakeholders and future users were engaged with to ensure the site is fit for purpose.	✓			Consultation was completed earlier this year

Surfacing

	Yes, Existing	Yes, Change Required	No,	Because of...
There is soft, impact-absorbing surfacing (rubber, artificial turf, compacted engineered wood fibre).		✓		Will be included in the playspace.
There are flush transition points to allow for smooth access between paths and play surfaces.		✓		Will be included in the playspace.
All accessible equipment pieces have an accessible surface treatment to enable ease of use.		✓		Will be included in the playspace. Refer 1, 3; A, D.
Path surfaces provide sensory play opportunities through materiality or texture features for children with visual, auditory, or cognitive disabilities.		✓		Will be included in the playspace.
Multiple ways to engage with the environment are offered (interactive elements, tactile paths, sensory gardens).		✓		Will be included in the playspace.

CHECKLIST FOR DESIGN:

03 CAN I STAY?

CHECKLIST FOR DESIGN:
CAN I STAY?

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Consider safety, facilities, landscape and the wider environment to ensure everyone can stay at the playspace for as long as they would like.

Safety

	Yes, Existing	Yes, Change Required	No,	Because of...
The playspace can be clearly observed from the street or neighbouring properties.		✓		All equipment will be renewed, except for the train, and observation will be appropriate.
There are clear sight lines to all play equipment pieces from the pathways and seating options to ensure comfortable supervision by carers.		✓		All equipment will be renewed, except for the train, and site lines will be appropriate.
Supporting facilities (BBQ, toilet, car park) are adequately lit (Regional Only).			✓	Reserve is Higher Neighbourhood classification.

Landscape

	Yes, Existing	Yes, Change Required	No,	Because of...
There is an adequate amount of shade to cover most play activities, pathways and seating areas through tree placement (especially during a summer afternoon).	✓			Existing trees will remain.
Large shelter is provided for shade and is strategically located to protect against the summer afternoon sun (Regional Only).			✓	Reserve is Higher Neighbourhood classification.
Small shelters are provided for shade and are strategically located to protect against the summer afternoon sun (Regional, District and Neighbourhood Only).	✓			Small shelters are located in the junior and senior play areas.
There are no allergenic or toxic plants that may cause health issues.		✓		There will be no allergenic or toxic plants within the design. Refer E.
Planting scheme is well-considered and responds to micro-climatic conditions, wind, views, topography, soil and is durable etc.		✓		The planting scheme will be well-considered. Refer E.
Vegetation does not obstruct pathways, signage, or lighting.		✓		Vegetation will not obstruct paths, signs or lighting. Refer E.
Local materials and existing vegetation have been considered in the design of the playspace to create a sustainable design.		✓		Local materials will be used on site (stones/logs etc.) and local plants will be incorporated. Refer 4-5, C and E.

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Facilities

	Yes, Existing	Yes, Change Required	No,	Because of...
Consideration to the facilities provided in the reserve align with the open space strategy hierarchy (see Page 04).	✓			Reserve is Higher Neighbourhood classification. This will be considered in design.
Seating provided is adequate for the scale and use of the playspace.		✓		Formal seating is located near and in the playground. Refer 6-7; F-G. Informal seating will be added to the playground. Refer 4-5, C.
There are various seating options to cater for a range of users (i.e. varied heights, back rests, arm rests, and wheelchair and pram spaces). There are various seating arrangements, such as individual and group seating.		✓		Formal seating is located near and in the playground. Refer 6-7; F-G. Informal seating will be added to the playground. Refer 4-5, C.
There are seating opportunities provided in a quiet location for retreat.		✓		Formal seating is located near and in the playground. Refer 6-7; F-G. Informal seating will be added to the playground. Refer 4-5, C.
There are accessible picnic tables provided within the playspace with overhangs for wheelchair users (Regional, District Neighbourhood Only).	✓			Formal seating is located near and in the playground. Refer 6-7; F-G.
Drinking water can easily be accessed by all playspace users and has fixtures that are easy to operate (Regional, District Neighbourhood Only).	✓			There is an existing drinking fountain.
Rubbish bins are provided, suitably located and can be utilised by all users.	✓			There are bins on site.
There is compliant bike parking (Regional, District, Neighbourhood Only).	✓			There is bike parking.
There are accessible BBQ facilities provided (Regional Only).	✓			There are BBQ facilities.
There are toilets (Regional and District Only).	✓			There are toilets.
There is an accessible toilet nearby that includes changing facilities for babies, children and adults within or nearby the playspace (Regional Only).			✓	Reserve is Higher Neighbourhood classification.
Art work/sculptures are located throughout the site (Regional and District Only).	✓			There is existing art work (mural on the wall of the toilets).
Facilities are accessible to all users, are considerate of children's safety and are easy to operate.	✓			Facilities will be accessible, considerate of safety and easy to use.

- A Play structure
- B Vehicle themed rockers
- C Nature play elements
- D Existing train play structure to be retained
- E New trees and/or garden bed
- F Existing shelter with picnic setting and BBQ
- G Existing seat to remain
- H Ramp to playground
- I Existing fence
- J Existing light pole



Site plan

Not to scale
08.2025



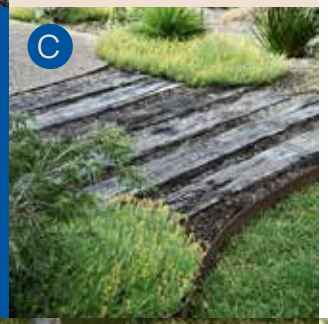
CROYDON PLAYGROUND RESERVE - JUNIOR
CROYDON
PLAYGROUND RENEWAL

City of Charles Sturt



COLOUR PALETTE







NATURE PLAY

- Balancing logs
- Timber sleepers
- Stepping stones
- Trees
- Garden beds



Images and plan are for illustrative purposes only. Final design, equipment or layout may vary. All existing trees and furniture to remain on site.



TRAINS AND TRANSPORT THEME

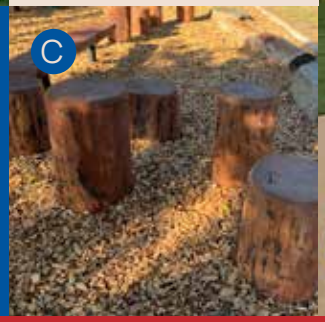






PLAY FEATURES

- Swinging
- Sliding
- Climbing
- Balancing
- Rocking
- Imagination play





CROYDON PLAYGROUND RESERVE - JUNIOR
CROYDON
PLAYGROUND RENEWAL

City of Charles Sturt

1. Play structure with slides and climbing
2. Climbing cube with monkey bars and rock climbing
3. Swings with basket swing
4. Nature play elements
5. Sitting rock
6. Existing shelter with picnic setting and BBQ
7. Relocated existing seat
8. Existing light pole
9. Existing fence
10. Existing basketball half court to remain



Site plan

Not to scale
08.2025



CROYDON PLAYGROUND RESERVE - SENIOR
CROYDON
PLAYGROUND RENEWAL

City of Charles Sturt



NATURE PLAY

- Balancing logs
- Log steppers



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PLAY FEATURES

- Swinging
- Sliding
- Climbing
- Balancing
- Imagination play





COLOUR PALETTE





CROYDON PLAYGROUND RESERVE - SENIOR
CROYDON
PLAYGROUND RENEWAL

City of Charles Sturt

CASE STUDIES:
WHAT TO DO

Project Name: St Clair
Landscape Architect: City of Charles Sturt





An analysis of several landscape architecture playgrounds within the City of Charles Sturt has been conducted to identify key design principles and best practices for future playground development. By examining elements such as accessibility, inclusivity, play value, safety, and connection to the surrounding environment, this review highlights what contributes to successful playground design. Insights gained from this analysis inform recommendations on how to create engaging, sustainable, and community-focused playspaces that cater to diverse users. This process ensures that future playgrounds align with best practices and effectively meet the needs of local communities.





CASE STUDIES:
WHAT TO DO

Project Name: Spad Street Reserve
Landscape Architect: City of Charles Sturt





Appropriate lighting to enhance time of day use and provide a feeling of safety.

Inclusion of equipment that offers challenge as users develop in ability and strength

Informal seating for park users throughout the space.

Surrounding landscape provides a comfortable and enjoyable environment.



Communication panels to encourage inclusive play.

Surfacing colour contrast to show activity vs. circulation space.

Multiple seating options with sufficient circulation space.

Formal enclosure through fencing to provide sense of safety and comfort adjacent to potential hazards (e.g. water bodies and roads)

Clear lines of sight throughout the playspace.



Formal entry zone through planting to provide a sense of welcome to the site.

CASE STUDIES:
WHAT TO DO

Project Name: Harold and Cynthia Anderson Reserve
Landscape Architect: City of Charles Sturt





Multiple seating options with sufficient circulation space.

Sensory focused and natural elements.



Play experience suitable for all ages and abilities (musical play) co-located with more challenging play experiences (rock scramble, not pictured here).

Ramped access to all-abilities play pieces.

Surrounding landscape provides a comfortable and enjoyable environment.



Unprogrammed spaces for imaginative play.

Play equipment theming and colour palette respond to the local context

CASE STUDIES:
WHAT TO DO

Project Name: Allenby Gardens Reserve
Landscape Architect: City of Charles Sturt






Clear sightlines help children and families to feel comfortable in the play space.
Playspace utilises existing trees for shade, with additional trees planted as needed.
Transparent and open design provide opportunities for children of all abilities to be at the centre of the play.
Inclusion of equipment that offers challenge as users develop in ability and strength
Multiple seating options.


Orientation path of consistent width and material linking entry points and play zones.
Sensory focused and natural elements.
Located adjacent to kick-about space.
Informal seating for park users.
Informal play opportunities to encourage creativity.

CASE STUDIES:
WHAT TO DO

Project Name: MJ McInerny Reserve
Landscape Architect: City of Charles Sturt

Surrounding landscape provides a comfortable and enjoyable environment.

Equipment provides multi- user play opportunities for all abilities and ages fully integrated into the playspace and reachable for everyone.

Diverse range of play equipment - slides, swings, flying foxes - which cater to different age groups and abilities



Playground has interactive and engaging play elements.

Orientation path of consistent width and material linking entry points and play zones.

Playspace utilises existing trees for shade, with additional trees planted as needed.

Bright and vibrant colours incorporated into the playspace design.

The toilet building was customised with public are to reflect local area history and artwork on the external cladding.



Equipment provides multi-user play opportunities for all abilities and ages fully integrated into the playspace and reachable for everyone.

Open turf area - space for the community to connect and gather. A location for community events.

Clear sightlines help children and families to feel comfortable in the play space.

The themes in the City of Charles Sturt's Community Vision 2040 have been reviewed to analyse MJ McInerney Reserve. This case study shows how the reserve reflects these themes by incorporating nature, fostering an engaging public space, strengthening connections, promoting inclusion, and adapting to community needs. Through this analysis, MJ McInerney Reserve is showcased as a well-designed project that enhances well-being and aligns with the city's vision.

Spaces that encourage inclusive group play are incorporated into the design.



Sensory focused and natural elements.

Equipment provides multi-user play opportunities for all abilities and ages fully integrated into the playspace and reachable for everyone.

Set within existing landscape features to provide strong sense of place.

Retention of existing trees improve urban heat island impacts.

Surrounding landscape provides a comfortable and enjoyable environment.



Orientation path of consistent width and material linking entry points and play zones.

Natural elements such as logs and stones are used to encourage children to interact with the natural environment.

Play equipment theming and colour palette respond to the local context

Shelter with picnic setting provides an opportunity for connection with locals.

CASE STUDIES:
WHAT NOT TO DO

Project Name: Tedder Reserve
Landscape Architect: City of Charles Sturt

Raised edge to playground creates accessibility issues for people with disabilities.



No visual communication boards with symbols or signs to assist children with speech or communication difficulties to express themselves.

The playground has elevated structures with steps but no ramps or transfer platforms, making it impossible for children using wheelchairs or those with mobility impairments to access key play areas.

Very limited shade of the playground, making it very hot in summer.

The playground lacks well-defined, continuous, and smooth pathways that allow wheelchair users and people with mobility impairments to navigate the space easily.



The playground does not incorporate features that support children with sensory processing differences, such as quiet zones, contrasting colours for navigation, or tactile elements that enhance play for children with vision impairments.

An analysis of several landscape architecture playgrounds within the City of Charles Sturt has been conducted to identify common design challenges and pitfalls to avoid in future playground development. By assessing factors such as accessibility barriers, lack of inclusive play opportunities, poor material durability, inadequate shade, and limited community connection, this review highlights elements that can negatively impact usability and enjoyment. These insights inform recommendations on what to avoid when designing playgrounds, ensuring that future playspaces are more inclusive, durable, and better suited to the needs of the community.

Transition point is not flush to only path leading to the playground.



Limited accessibility off of the shared use path.

No accessible path to shelter and seating.

The playground does not provide a diverse range of play elements that accommodate different abilities.



No accessible pathways within the playground.

CASE STUDIES:
WHAT NOT TO DO

Project Name: Thomas Harkness Reserve
Landscape Architect: Oxigen





Shelter and seating is not strategically paced for caregivers to supervise children.



Fence is unwelcoming and limits where play activities can take place, and effectively 'cages' play into a contained space.

No variety in planting, meaning a lack of sensory experiences for kids.

The playground does not provide a diverse range of play elements that accommodate different abilities.

There is a noticeable absence of equipment specifically designed for toddlers, such as low-height slides or safe crawling spaces.



A lack of sensory-friendly play elements such as textured surfaces, musical instruments, or interactive panels that engage children with different sensory needs.

The playground does not incorporate features that support children with sensory processing differences, such as quiet zones, contrasting colours for navigation, or tactile elements that enhance play for children with vision impairments.

Fence can be used as an excuse not to supervise children properly.

A PLACE TO CALL HOME,
A PLACE WHERE WE BELONG.

charlessturt.sa.gov.au
yoursaycharlessturt.com.au

City of Charles Sturt