

POLICY NAME

Shade Facilities at Playspaces

DATE ADOPTED

25 November 2019

REVIEW DATE

1/11/2025

COUNCIL MINUTE NUMBER

ORD 261

RELATED DOCUMENTS

SHADE FACILITIES AT PLAYSACES
COOLING THE CITY STRATEGY

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND
RECREATION

POLICY TYPE

Council

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a direction and approach to the design and provision of shade facilities to ensure that future and existing playspaces, have infrastructure that;

- Provides opportunities for everyone to stay at the playspaces for as long as they like in a safe, welcoming and comfortable environment.
- Promotes activation and higher community use of playspaces through the provision of better quality and more functional open space.
- Improves the liveability of the City through providing playspaces that contribute to social (e.g. health, social connection), environmental (e.g. cooling the City) and economic outcomes (e.g. infrastructure investment, impact on property values)

Policy Statement

Council provides multiple playspaces across the Local Government Area. This Shade Facilities at Playspaces Policy includes the principles of shade facility provision, in addition to providing guidelines in relation to the provision of artificial or natural shade.

Scope

This policy relates to the provision of shade facilities to all playspaces, existing and future, within the Penrith Local Government Area. Shade facilities include artificial or natural shade.

Definitions

Playspaces: A playspace is more than just equipment, it is the entire setting (including seating etc.) used and enjoyed as part of the play experience. A space with a play focus for younger and older children, as well as their carers, such as playgrounds, informal activity areas, nature play or adventure play.

Artificial Shade: Such as a built structure including shade sails, framed shade, solid roof structures (e.g Colorbond), play equipment with shade features, picnic shelters, rotundas, canopies and the like.

Natural Shade: Such as canopy trees and vegetation.

Policy

Principles

The following (i) – (xii) are the Policy principles:

- i) It will not be possible to provide 100% shade coverage to all playspaces at all times. Provision will maximise shade over playspaces between the hours of 10am and 4pm.
- ii) Shade facility provision will be designed to provide shade throughout the year.
- iii) Shade will be provided at all existing and future planned playspaces in the City incorporating natural and/or artificial shade provision based on individual site characteristics.
- iv) The use of natural shade provided by trees will be prioritised over artificial shade options, as a long-term shade solution.
- v) When designing playspaces assessment of availability of existing natural shade will be evaluated when determining location.
- vi) If artificial shade is provided, materials are to meet Australian Standards and specifications will ensure durability, quality and whole of life value.
- vii) Specified UV blockout ratings are to be met, and design should minimise heat conduction and allow appropriate air flow.
- viii) If artificial shade is provided, at the time of renewal of the artificial shade an assessment is to be undertaken. If the assessment deems that natural shade is sufficient, the artificial shade should be removed from the site.
- ix) Play equipment that incorporates shade is to be considered when purchasing play equipment, dependent on resource availability and level of shade provided or planned for the site.
- x) Developers are to provide a landscape masterplan from a qualified landscape architect for each park and play location, and shade facility provision over play facilities and seated areas must be provided and maximised.
- xi) Shade audits are to be completed every 5 years to monitor effectiveness of shade provision and enable future planning of shade installation and tree planting.

- xii) The community is to be advised of shade facility projects, and engagement undertaken when required.

Implementation

a) Natural Shade

Green infrastructure including tree planting and landscaping contributes to cooling of the City, providing attractive public spaces, and creating a positive impact on people's health and well-being, therefore;

- Location and design features of the playspace should take advantage of existing and appropriate natural shade.
- If no or limited natural shade exists, appropriate tree species should be planted in suitable locations (trees should be fast growing, able to achieve a suitable height, and have a low risk of falling branches and debris).
- Trees are to be planted in advance of playspace development at locations identified as future playspace sites, and at sites where artificial shade renewal will be required which can be replaced by natural shade.
- Infill tree planting around existing playspaces at strategic locations is to be undertaken.
- Trees in decline are to be identified and tree planting undertaken for continuation of tree canopy into the future.

b) Artificial Shade

Artificial shade structure provision can be prioritised when the following criteria are satisfied:

- The establishment of natural shade is difficult or impossible.
- The provision of new or, relocation of existing play equipment to benefit from natural shade is not a viable option.
- Large playspaces and/or playspaces with several items grouped together in a large expanse of soft fall, cannot be effectively shaded by trees.
- The area will remain comfortable for use during cooler months.
- Community engagement determines artificial shade is the most agreeable solution.