

7.3 Inclusive Play Principles Applied to the Play Space Hierarchy

7.3.1 Introduction

The forty (40) play spaces in the Waverley LGA are offered at four (4) different levels within a hierarchy ranging from Pocket, to Neighbourhood, to District to Regional play spaces. Each play space type in the hierarchy increases in size and user capacity, complexity and choice of play experiences. These incremental increases mean people stay longer, and come from a wider catchment. Typically as the play space increases in size, so does the number and variety of play experiences and supportive facilities. Similarly budgets and maintenance regimes increase equivalent to the hierarchy of the play space and park.

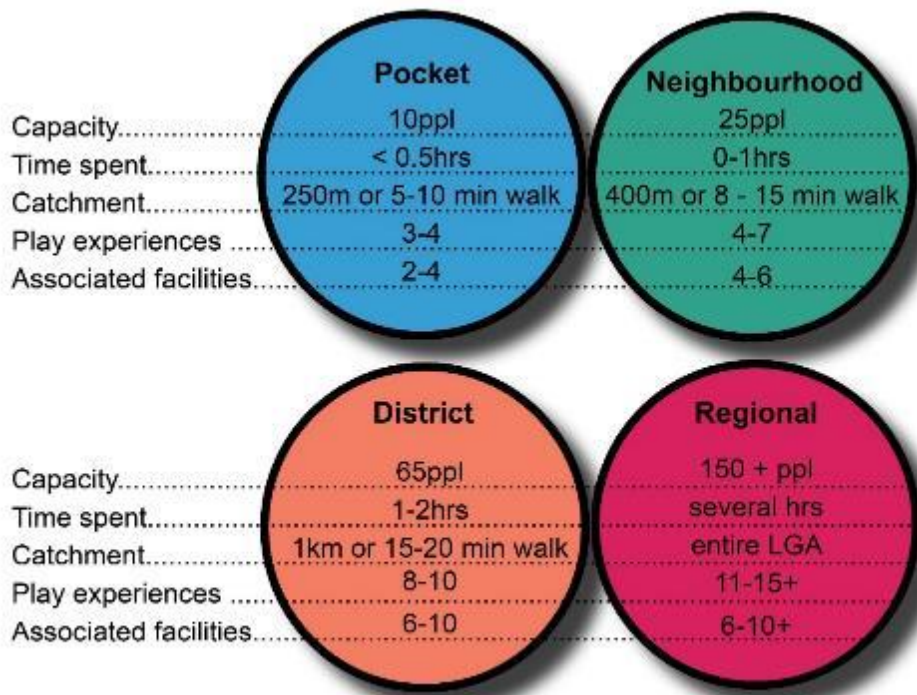


Figure 7.4: Play Space Hierarchy [Data Extracted from Waverley Play Space Strategy 2014-2029]

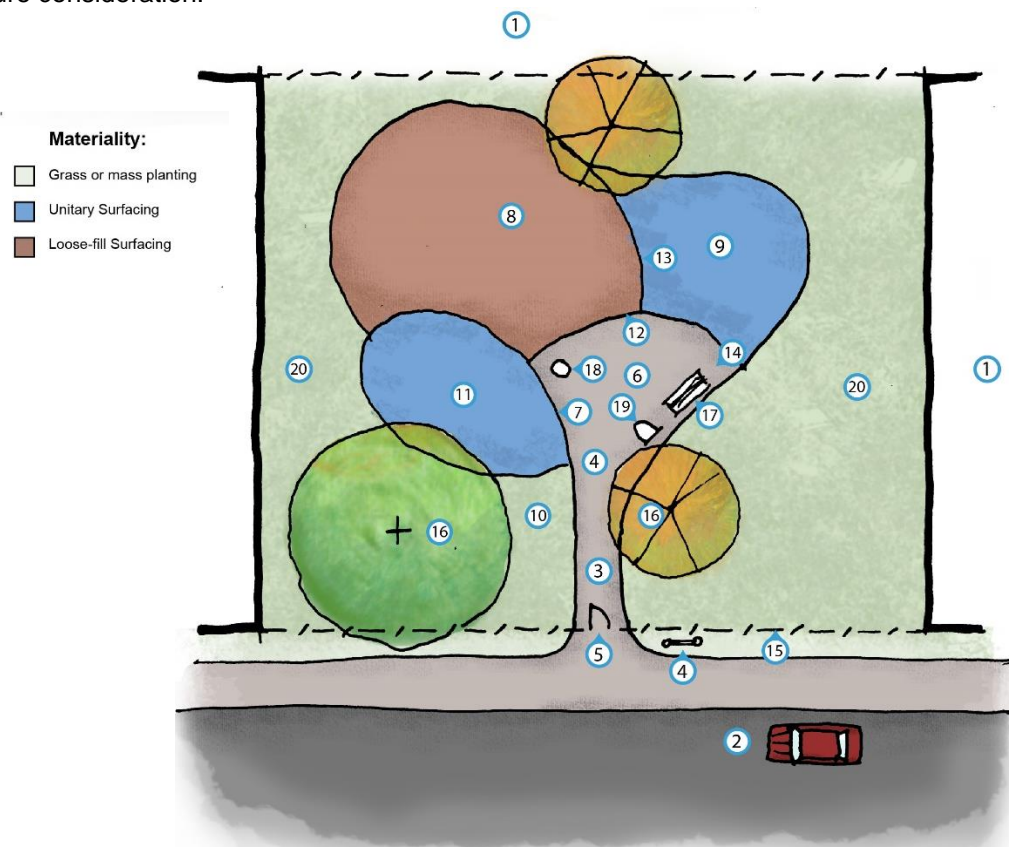
7.3.2 'In Principle' Play Setting Design

'In Principle' diagrams have been developed for each level of the play space hierarchy (pocket, neighbourhood, district and regional) to demonstrate the application of the inclusive play spatial design principles.

The diagrams illustrate the overall spatial arrangement of inclusive play space components and are provided as examples only. Each new play space will have its own unique spatial layout depending on many factors such as size, topography, site orientation, existing vegetation, adjoining land uses, etc. It is the designer's job to apply the principles to suit the site characteristics, opportunities and constraints.

Pocket Play Space

Waverley Council have not nominated any Pocket parks to be upgraded to inclusive play spaces at this stage. The following diagram illustrates the application of inclusive play principles at a Pocket park level for future consideration.



Can We Get There?

Location:

- 1 Located in small urban spaces and parks

Immediate Context:

- 2 Located within 20m of side street parking

Access:

- 3 An accessible path of travel links the play space

Signage:

- 4 Play space signage

Upon Arrival:

- 5 Clear entry point
6 Central gathering space
7 Play pods are connected to the gathering space

Can We Play?

Play Experience:

- 8 Play for older children
9 Play for younger children
10 Quiet spots for unprogrammed play
11 Nature based play options

Wayfinding:

- 12 Luminance contrast between adjacent ground surfaces
13 Plants, rocks and sitting walls are used to differentiate play pods

Surfacing:

- 14 Area to park strollers and mobility device

Can We Stay?

Safety:

- 15 Play space is fenced
16 Evergreen and Deciduous trees are provided for shade

Facilities:

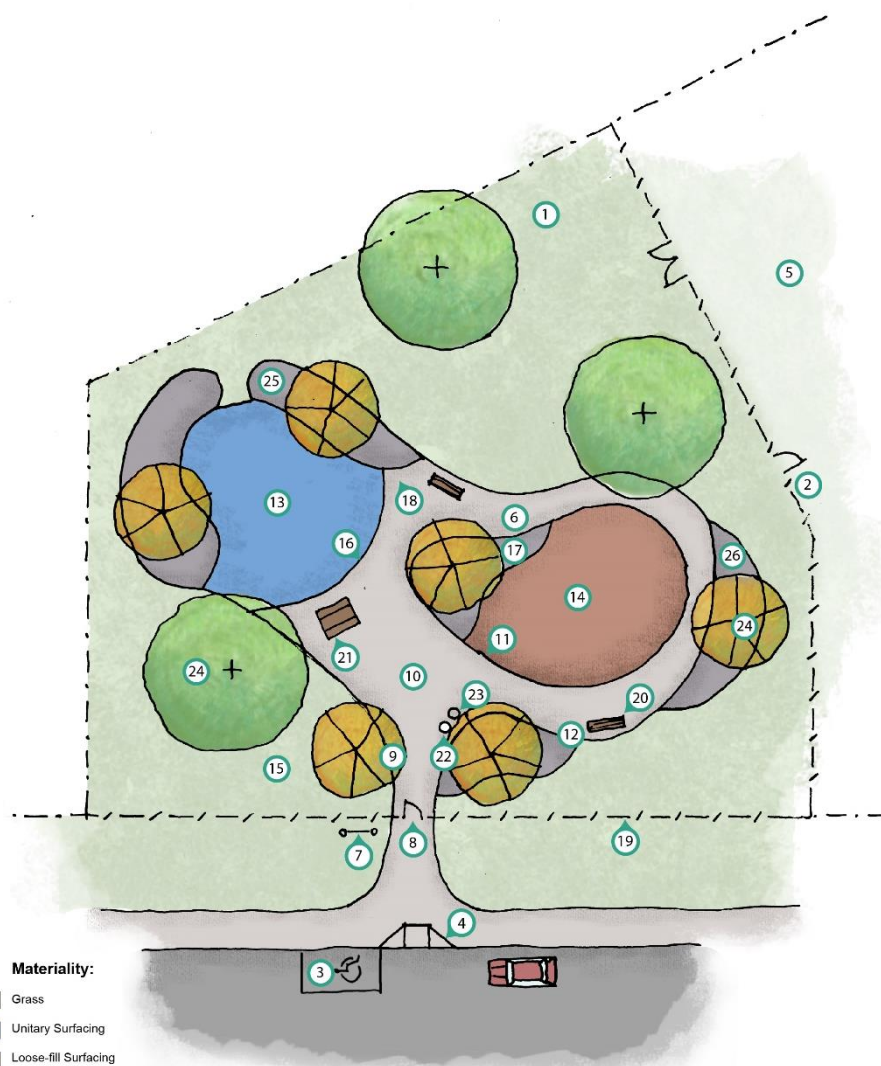
- 17 Seating
18 Bins
19 Drinking fountain

Landscape:

- 20 Low shrubs and strappy plants or grassy spaces

Figure 7.5: Pocket Play Space Inclusive Design Diagram

Neighbourhood Play Space



Can We Get There?

Location:

- 1 Located in a district or neighbourhood park setting, adjacent to open space with high landscape amenity and naturalness
- 2 Play space is connected to a path that leads to other amenities

Immediate Context:

- 3 Located within 50-70m of kerbside parking
- 4 The carparking has kerb ramps
- 5 Sited near open grassy space

Access:

- 6 An accessible path of travel links the play space

Signage:

- 7 Play space signage

Play Space Entrance:

- 8 Obvious and visible from carpark/streetscape
- 9 Sense of welcome using trees, boulders, artwork

Upon Arrival:

- 10 Central gathering space with good surveillance of surrounding play space
- 11 Play pods are connected to the gathering space
- 12 Respite area integrated off the navigation path

Can We Play?

Play Experience:

- 13 Play for older children
- 14 Play for younger children
- 15 Quiet spots for unprogrammed play

Wayfinding:

- 16 Luminance contrast between adjacent ground surfaces
- 17 Plants, rocks and sitting walls are used to differentiate play pods

Surfacing:

- 18 Area to park strollers and mobility device

Can We Stay?

Safety:

- 19 Play space is fenced

Facilities:

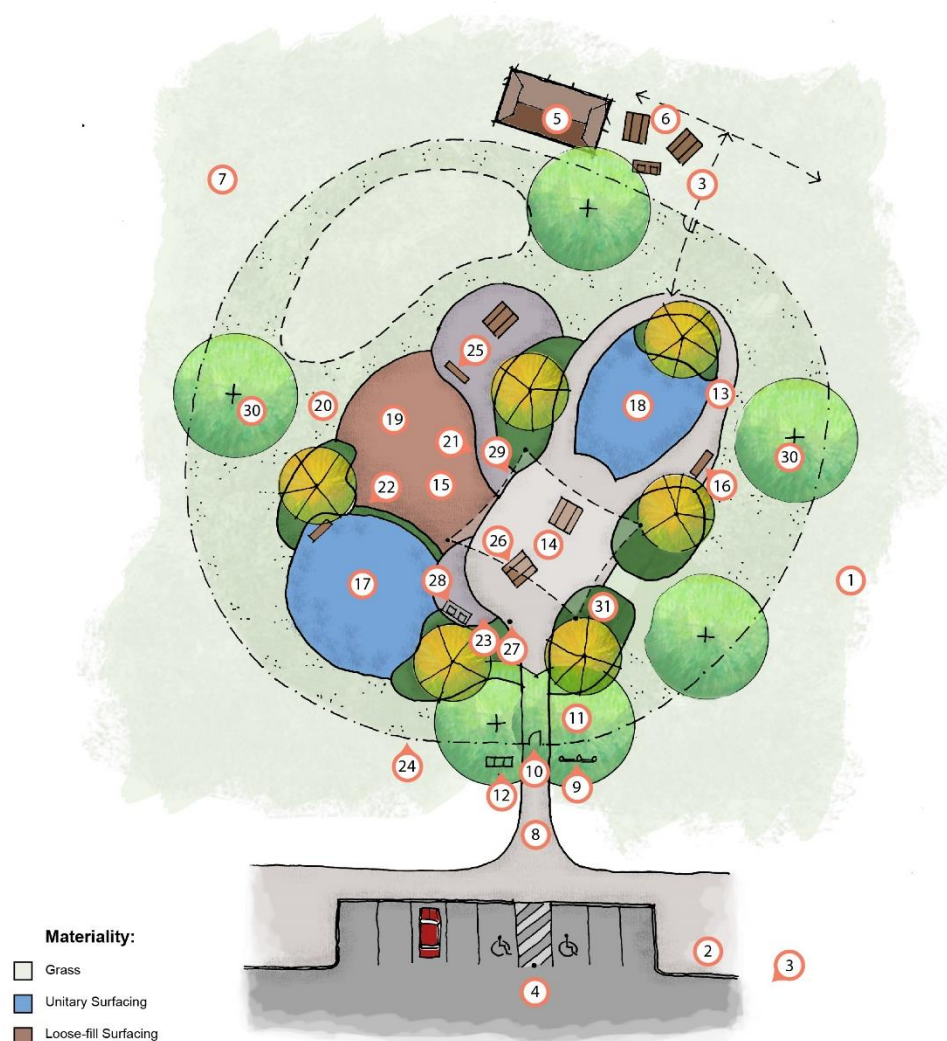
- 20 Varied seating options
- 21 Picnic tables
- 22 Bins
- 23 Drinking fountain

Landscape:

- 24 Evergreen and Deciduous trees are provided for shade
- 25 Low shrubs and strappy plants or grassy spaces
- 26 Boulders as a play item

Figure 7.6: Neighbourhood Play Space Inclusive Design Diagram

District Play Space



Can We Get There?

Location:

- 1 Located in a district park setting, adjacent to open space with high landscape amenity and naturalness
- 2 A public transport link within 100m of play space
- 3 Play space is connected to a path that leads to other amenities
- 4 Located within 50-70m of large dedicated carpark including accessible parking and ramp
- 5 Amenities block
- 6 Sited near picnic areas with picnic tables and BBQs
- 7 Sited near open grassy space

Immediate Context:

Access:

- 8 An accessible path of travel links the play space to carparking and public transport

Signage:

- 9 Play space signage

Play Space Entrance:

- 10 Obvious and visible from carpark/streetscape
- 11 Framed sense of welcome using trees, boulders, artwork
- 12 Bins provided

Upon Arrival:

- 13 One main path around the playground
- 14 Central gathering space with good surveillance of surrounding play space
- 15 Play pods are distributed around the navigation path
- 16 Respite areas are integrated off the navigation path

Can We Play?

Play Experience:

- 17 Play for older children
- 18 Play for younger children
- 19 Offer play experiences for differing abilities/ages/needs
- 20 Quiet spots for unprogrammed play

Wayfinding:

- 21 Luminance contrast between adjacent ground surfaces
- 22 Plants, rocks and sitting walls are used to differentiate play pods

Surfacing:

- 23 Area to park strollers and mobility device

Can We Stay?

Safety:

- 24 Play space is fenced

Facilities:

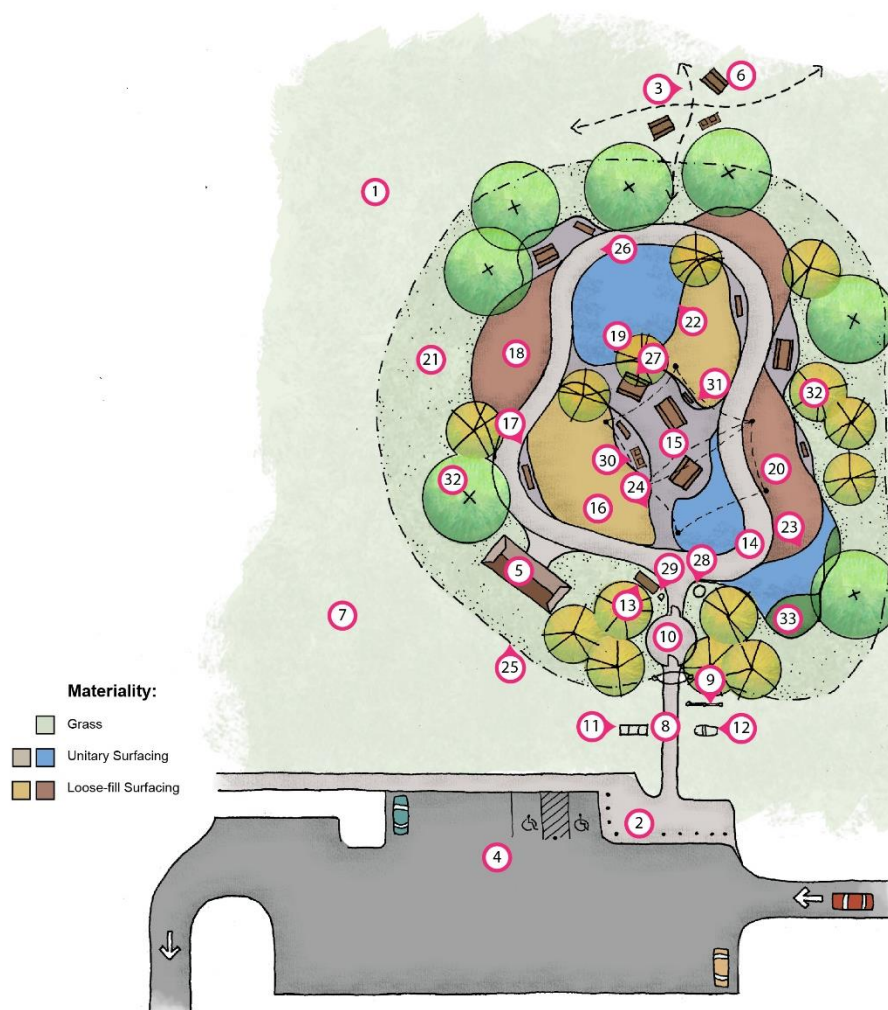
- 25 Varied seating options
- 26 Picnic tables
- 27 Drinking fountain
- 28 Accessible BBQ
- 29 Shade structure

Landscape:

- 30 Evergreen and Deciduous trees are provided for shade
- 31 Low shrubs and strappy plants or grassy spaces

Figure 7.7: District Play Space Inclusive Design Diagram

Regional Play Space



Can We Get There?

Location:

- 1 Located in a regional park setting, adjacent to open space with high landscape amenity and naturalness
- 2 A public transport link within 100m of play space
- 3 Play space is connected to a path that leads to other amenities

Immediate Context:

- 4 Located within 50-70m of large dedicated carpark including accessible parking, minibus parking and bus drop-off point
- 5 Amenities block
- 6 Sited near picnic areas with picnic tables and BBQs
- 7 Sited near open grassy space

Access:

- 8 An accessible path of travel links the play space to carparking and public transport

Signage:

- 9 Play space signage

Play Space Entrance:

- 10 Doubled-gated 'airlock' entry, obvious and visible from carpark/streetscape and expressing a sense of welcome
- 11 Bin enclosure provided
- 12 Bike racks provided
- 13 Additional seating at entrance

Upon Arrival:

- 14 Clear path network around the playground
- 15 Central gathering space with good surveillance of surrounding play space
- 16 Play pods are distributed around the navigation path
- 17 Respite areas are integrated off the navigation path

Can We Play?

Play Experience:

- 18 Play for older children
- 19 Play for younger children
- 20 Offer play experiences for differing abilities/ages/needs
- 21 Quiet spots for unprogrammed play

Wayfinding:

- 22 Luminance contrast between adjacent ground surfaces
- 23 Plants, rocks and sitting walls are used to differentiate play pods

Surfacing:

- 24 Area to park strollers and mobility device

Can We Stay?

Safety:

- 25 Play space is fenced

Facilities:

- 26 Varied seating options
- 27 Bins
- 28 Drinking fountains
- 29 Accessible BBQ
- 30 Shade structure

Landscape:

- 31 Evergreen and Deciduous trees are provided for shade
- 32 Low shrubs and strappy plants or grassy space

Figure 7.8: Regional Play Space Inclusive Design Diagram

7.3.3 Number of Play Types

Play spaces progressively increase in size and budget allocation across the hierarchy, allowing for a corresponding increase in the number of play experiences that can be included. For example, Regional play spaces should provide a generous allocation of all the play experiences, whereas smaller play spaces are more discretionary in terms of available space and budget.

It is the play space designer's job to assist the community in choosing what play experiences to include at each site, balancing site constraints, adjoining residential amenity concerns, and particular desires or aspirations of the community for the play space.

The following chart (Figure 7.9) provides guidance on the recommended allocation of play experiences across the different play space hierarchies.

The sliding scale (from 'consider' to 'highly recommended') is intended to help guide the decision making process when deciding which experiences should be included over others. The numbers indicate the recommended number of each type of experience per play space hierarchy. The numbers shown are advisory only, and designers should take into account that many types of play experiences can overlap. For example a group see-saw provides at least five (5) play experiences, including physical play, social, side-by-side, imaginative, and intergenerational play.

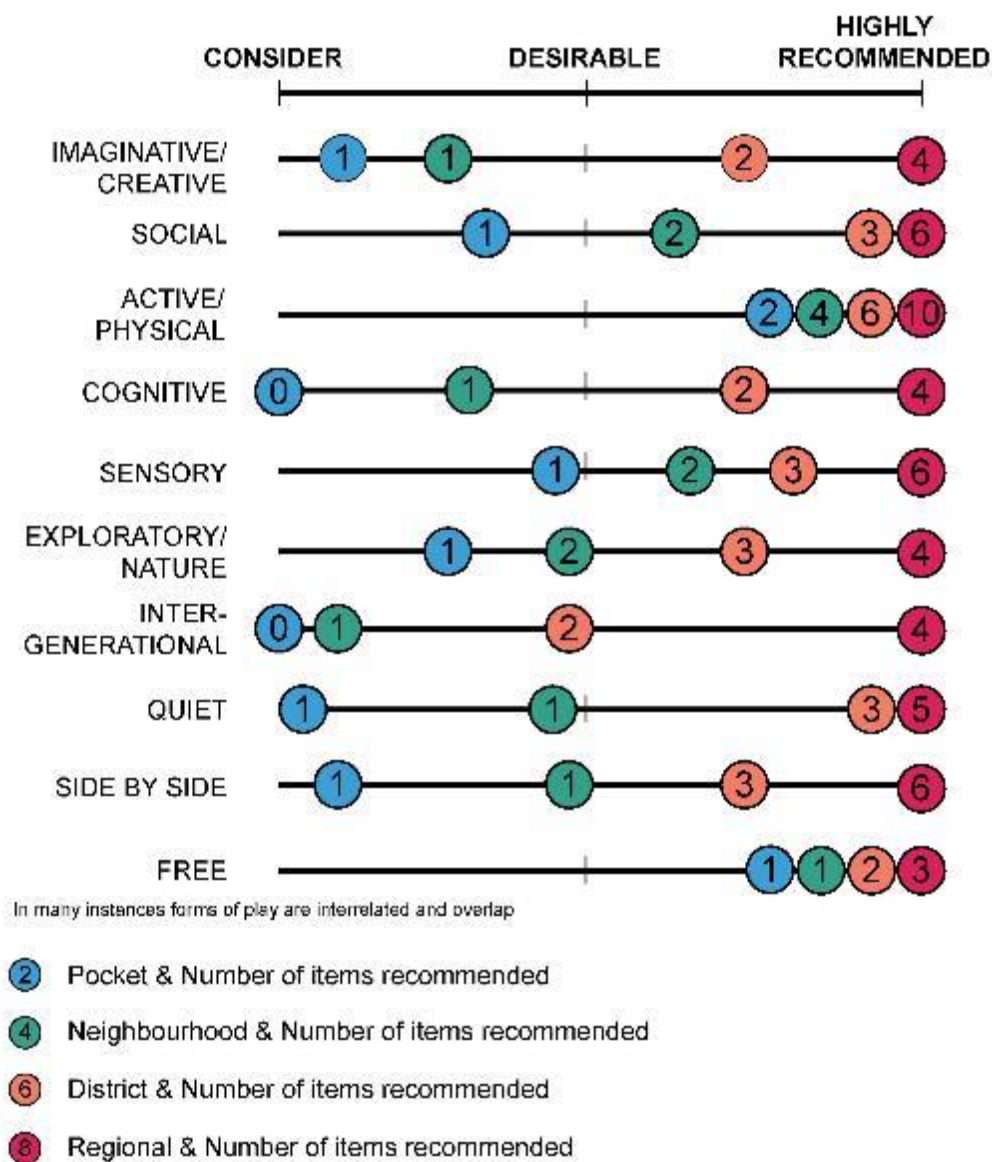


Figure 7.9: Recommended Number of Play Types for each Hierarchy Level

Worked Example

A Neighbourhood play space could provide:

- > 4 active/physical play types (highly recommended);
- > 1 free play area (highly recommended);
- > 2 social play areas (desirable);
- > 2 sensory play items (desirable);
- > 2 exploratory/nature play areas (desirable);
- > 1 side-by-side play activity (desirable);
- > 1 quiet space (desirable);
- > 1 cognitive play challenge (desirable);
- > 1 imaginative/creative play setting (desirable); and
- > 1 intergenerational play item (consider using).

7.3.4 The 'Mosaic' of Inclusive Play Experience

The inclusive play principles can be applied to each type of play space in Waverley Council's play space hierarchy. However, the scale and complexity of inclusive play is proportional with the play space hierarchy, function and available budget. The larger the play space, the more inclusive play elements and experiences can be achieved in it, whereas in smaller play spaces fewer elements and experiences are typically achieved.

This then introduces the application of inclusive play design principles on a sliding scale, where all principles should be applied to Regional play spaces, and as many design principles as possible applied to District level play spaces. Neighbourhood play spaces have a pared-back approach, and Pocket play spaces offer a basic level based on broad principles only.

It is the play space designer's job to assist the community in choosing what play experiences to include at each site, balancing site constraints, adjoining residential amenity concerns, and particular desires or aspirations of the community for the play space.

Pocket and Neighbourhood play spaces are unique in that they offer a 'mosaic' of play approach in a suburb: a group of smaller play spaces within a suburb should be seen as offering inclusive play experiences which complement each other, as shown in Figure 7.10. What is not available at one play space may be available elsewhere or nearby. For example, play space A offers rocking, spinning and climbing, while neighbouring play space B offers a variety of slides and swings.

This 'mosaic' approach is supported by the Play Space Strategy and can be further investigated and applied through community consultation, and during detailed design of Pocket and Neighbourhood play spaces.

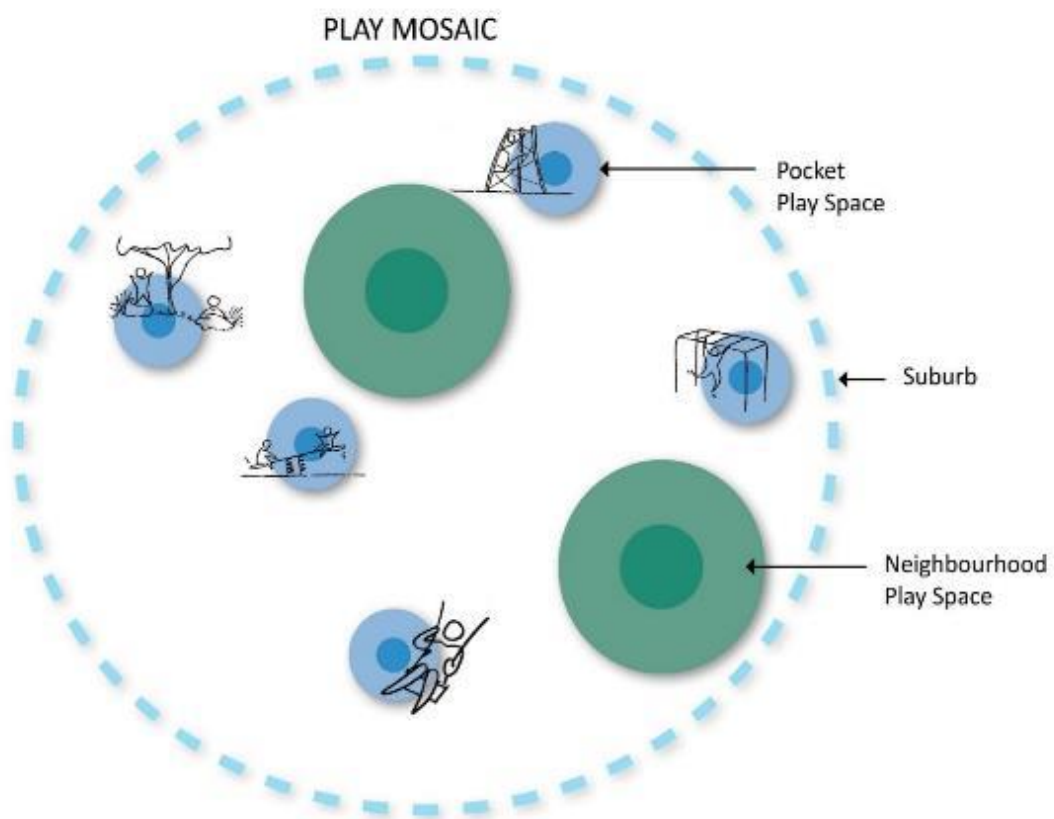


Figure 7.10: The Play Mosaic Approach