

PLAYGROUND SHADE POLICY

(COMMUNITY POLICY)

1. Scope

The Playground Shade Policy (this 'Policy') relates to the provision of shade facilities to playgrounds within the Livingstone region which are, or will come, under the control of Council.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide direction and a uniform approach to the provision of the most suitable form of shade to existing and future playgrounds to ensure the community is provided with the best possible protection against harmful UVR.

3. References (legislation/related documents)

Council related documents

Management of Vegetation on Council Controlled Land Policy

Other related documents

[AS 4685.0:2017: Playground equipment and surfacing](#)

[Creating Shade at Public Facilities - Policy and Guidelines for Local Government \(2nd ed\) \(Queensland Government, Australian Institute of Environmental Health\)](#)

[Human Rights Act 2019](#)

[National Construction Code 2019 – Building Code of Australia \(Australian Building Codes Board\)](#)

[Sun Safety in Queensland](#)

[SunSmart - Shade Guidelines \(Cancer Council Victoria\)](#)

[The shade handbook \(Cancer Council Western Australia\)](#)

4. Definitions

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions shall apply:

Appropriate standards	1. AS 4685.0:2017: Playground equipment and surfacing; and 2. National Construction Code 2019 – Building Code of Australia (Australian Building Codes Board).
Council	Livingstone Shire Council.
Natural shade	Trees that provide shade.
Solid roofed shade structure	A roof usually steel (e.g. colorbond) or aluminium which is waterproof and provides maximum protection against UVR penetration and reflected UVR.
UVR	Ultraviolet radiation.

5. Policy Statement

Council provides a range of playground facilities across the region and it is recognised that Council has a responsibility to ensure that those facilities allow the community to undertake recreational activities in a safe and enjoyable manner.

5.1 Suitable Playground Shade

It is unrealistic to provide 100% shade coverage to all playgrounds at all times. It is Council's preference that natural shade options be utilised where possible.

While shade sails have become popular and can provide a colourful addition to a playground they:

- a) Are the least effective material for protection from UVR;
- b) Do not provide protection from reflected UVR as well as natural shade or solid roofs;
- c) Have a short life span;
- d) Are susceptible to vandalism; and
- e) Require intensive maintenance.

Solid roofed shade structures:

- a) Provide a higher level of sun protection;
- b) Are more resistant to vandalism;
- c) Have a longer life span;
- d) Require less maintenance; and
- e) Provide a greater degree of protection to the play equipment and soft fall under them resulting in lower maintenance and longer life spans for these items.

5.2 Forward Planning: Playgrounds

Council will develop and maintain a Playgrounds Shade Plan which:

- a) Details all playgrounds across the region;
- b) Determines whether natural shade and/or a solid roofed shade structure is appropriate at each location;
- c) Specifies the location of existing built shade structures;
- d) Determines preferred tree species for each location should natural shade be the preferred mode of shade;
- e) Determines preferred built structures for each location; and
- f) Is subject to periodic review.

5.3 Transfer of Parkland to Council

Any playground facilities on land to be transferred to Council as a result of development under the *Planning Act 2016* must have solid roof shade structures.

5.4 New Shade Structures

- a) Council's Facilities Management Team must approve the design and colour and supervise the construction of all new solid roof shade structures which must comply with the appropriate standards.
- b) Consultation is to be undertaken with residents whose homes have views directly onto the playground facilities where shade structures are proposed.
- c) Existing shade sail structures will be progressively phased out and replaced in accordance with the Playgrounds Shade Plan and be subject to funding availability.

- d) Natural shade and solid roofed shade structures should aim to provide maximum shade over playgrounds between the hours of 10am and 3pm.

5.5 Natural Shade

Trees utilised for the provision of natural shade over playgrounds should:

- a) Be well suited to the soil and climatic conditions;
- b) Be fast growing and able to achieve a suitable height; and
- c) Have a low risk of falling branches and debris.

5.6 New Trees

All plantings are to be carried out in accordance with Council's Management of Vegetation on Council Controlled Land Policy under the direction of the Parks and Open Spaces team.

6. Changes to this Policy

This Policy is to remain in force until any of the following occur:

1. The related information is amended/replaced; or
2. Other circumstances as determined from time to time by the Council.

7. Repeals/Amendments

This Policy repeals Livingstone Shire Council Policy titled 'Playground Shade Policy (v1.2)'.

Version	Date	Action
1	23/01/2018	Adopted
1.1	02/10/2018	Administrative Amendments – reflect organisational restructure
1.2	18/11/2020	Administrative Amendments – related documents and definitions updated
2.0	18/02/2025	Adopted – Minor Administrative Amendments and CEO name updated

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