

# GO OUTSIDE AND PLAY

Making our city an  
even better place to play.



Adopted May 2012

**HUTT CITY**  
TE AWA KAIRANGI

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## Mayor's Introduction

Playing outside isn't just fun. It's also good for us. It is vital for our well being. Research shows that outdoor play engages imagination, promotes healthy living and enhances motor skills and development. Playing outside can challenge and inspire us. We learn from nature and outdoor pursuits.

Being active outside brings the City to life. While we are playing and enjoying sites where play happens we participate in community life and we enjoy ourselves.

I am proud to sponsor Go Outside and Play, the Hutt City Council's first comprehensive plan for play in Hutt City.

I'm advocating for a City that gives children, young people and their families access to a range of great creative play, physical recreation and socialising opportunities at parks that are appealing and well used. I'm hoping kids and their friends will arrive home from playing on our parks tired, grubby and wet from time to time. Above all, I want our kids to have fun outside.

This strategic document has been adopted by the Hutt City Council to establish the key principles that will guide the City's provision of play opportunities. A number of residents and organisations provided comments and submissions. A number of new and good ideas came forward and many of these have been incorporated into Go Outside and Play.

I encourage you to look through this document. And after you've done that, do yourself a favour. Go outside and PLAY!

Have fun.



**Ray Wallace**  
**Mayor**



## Executive Summary

“Research indicates that children who develop the key movement skills and experience the joy of moving, gain physical confidence and competence and will participate in physical activity and enjoy the many benefits an active life provides. Children that get a good start, including access to open space, experience better health as adults. The extra incentive for assisting children to become confident and competent movers is that these children are more likely to lead physically active lifestyles in the future”. SPARC, 2007

Along with other organisations, the Hutt City Council provides a range of spaces and facilities for children’s play. Council believes that children’s play, is vital.

Go Outside and Play is a plan that will guide the provision of play spaces and playgrounds in Hutt City. It supports the themes set out in An Integrated Vision for Hutt City and addresses principles 2 and 3 of the Reserves Strategic Directions. Our aim is to offer sites that provide a diverse range of play opportunities, including imaginative play and also exploring nature.

The emphasis in this document is on Council provision of play spaces and playgrounds for those 12 years old and younger.

Go Outside and Play includes a set of broad principles for planning and managing Council’s provision of play spaces citywide.

Council does not subscribe to thinking that says a park is not really a park unless it features a seat, bin and playground. The nature of play is wide ranging. Council will attempt to provide for a number of play requirements across a variety of sites and recognises that there is no standard solution. In many cases this will involve simple site upgrades including drainage, seating, paths, signage and tree planting.

Council recognises that some additional playgrounds would be beneficial. The Central Ward is an area where additional playgrounds and play spaces can be justified. It may be possible to meet some of the public’s requirements for play by working closely with select schools.

At the time Go Outside and Play was adopted the level of maintenance on playgrounds managed by Council was up to date in terms of safety. However, much of our equipment is past its best before date and many sites are not very appealing. Implementing Go Outside and Play over a 15 year period will lift the quality and appeal of playgrounds. Clearly there will be funding implications.

## Process

Go Outside and Play was been prepared by officers in the Parks and Gardens Division of Council in 2011. A draft version of the document was released for consultation in October, November and December 2011. Submissions to the Draft document were considered and a number of changes were proposed, including the addition of the Action Plan contained in Go Outside and Play.

The Policy Committee of Council approved the proposed changes at its meeting on 24 April and these were adopted by Council on 16 May 2012.

Implementing Go Outside and Play, particularly the Action Plan depends on securing funding through the Long Term Plan and Annual Plan process.

### *Note:*

*On 6 June 2012 the Community Plan Committee of Council resolved to fund \$70,000 to address deferred maintenance in 2012/12. The Committee also resolved to increase annual funding of playground renewals from \$120,000 to \$195,000.*

*Council contributions to school playgrounds and capital funding for new playgrounds is currently unfunded. Officers will raise proposals to fund these projects in future Long Term Plan and Annual Plan projects.*

## **Acknowledgements**

A significant amount of material contained in this document has been sourced from the following 3 documents:

- Regional Public Health, Healthy Open Spaces – A summary of the impact of open spaces on health and well being (2010)
- North Shore City Council, Parks Playground Plan (2009)
- Dunedin City Council, Play Strategy (2006)

## **Submitters**

Twenty Five submissions were made in response to the Draft version of Go Outside and Play. These submissions have heavily influenced the content of the final version of Go Outside and Play. Council thanks all the submitters and is very grateful for their written and oral contributions.

## **The Playground Contractor**

Open Spaces Limited, Council's contractor for the inspection and maintenance of playgrounds, has provided useful insights and a great deal of technical information. As a result Go Outside and Play will have a very practical application at strategic, funding and operational levels.

## Background

Council adopted the Reserves Strategic Directions in 2003. This high level strategic document guides the management and development of the City's open space network. The document recommended that a number of tasks related to playgrounds be investigated.

Go Outside and Play addresses the

“need to consider alternatives to playground provision such as imaginative play opportunities in more natural settings. Imaginative versus physical play needs to be better balanced when considering recreational needs of youngsters. Provision for playground equipment is becoming increasingly regulated and current standards curb Council's ability to offer a wide range of challenging and interesting artificial play”,

HCC Reserves Strategic Directions page 22.

## Key Principles

Go Outside and Play provides a strategic approach to the provision of play opportunities and playgrounds across Hutt City.

Go Outside and Play is oriented towards outdoor play spaces that are located on public open spaces that the Hutt City Council manages. This document is primarily focussed on 0 to 12 year olds.

The following principles provide the foundation for Go Outside and Play and provide guidance for setting funding priorities in the Parks and Reserves Asset Management Plan and Council's Long Term Plan.

### Vision

Hutt City's outdoor play spaces will contribute towards building healthy, active, outdoor lifestyles locally for children, young people and their families

### Principles

Principle		Explanation
<b>Play Spaces</b>		
1	Play and having fun is a Priority	Outdoor play will be a popular activity and will be undertaken for its own sake (having fun), as a by-product it will stimulate physical activity, imagination, communication, socialisation a sense of belonging and confidence for users and their families
2	Quality Environment	Quality outdoor play opportunities and experiences are a vital component of Hutt City's liveability
		As urban areas become more intensively developed it will be necessary to offset development by providing additional public open spaces and/or improving the quality of existing public open spaces
		Play spaces will appeal to current and potential users and their families and care giver, many are or could be important neighbourhood focal points and are located within public open spaces
		An appropriate level of amenities and facilities will be provided for visitors and their care-givers
		Play spaces will be managed and maintained in accordance with Reserve Management Plans. Consideration will be given to the character, terrain and profile of the site and the cost of ongoing maintenance services.



Principle		Explanation
3	Accessibility and Distribution	Play Spaces will be available locally
		The terrain of hill suburbs, the customary use and location of playgrounds and presence of footpaths will be considered and may justify the provision of more closely spaced playgrounds
		It will be possible to walk or cycle to a play space within 600m (as the crow flies) in residential areas without crossing high traffic count* roads, railway lines or watercourses *High Traffic Count = 10,000 vehicle movements per day or greater
		Council will actively pursue agreements with some schools, particularly in areas where there are gaps in Council's provision in order to provide quality places at lower costs to ratepayers and tax payers
		Suburban and Premier grade playgrounds will be located close to frequent public transport and cycling routes
4	Priority for Provision	Overall, communities of lower socio-economic demographics* will be prioritised for play space development/upgrades and this <i>may</i> include play equipment *Ministry of Health Deprivation Index 2006 has been used to identify lower socio-economic demographics for Go Outside and Play
		With the exception of a premier playground, the standard and maintenance of play equipment and play spaces will be similar citywide
5	Interest	Play spaces will be varied and will be suitable for a range of play opportunities
		It may be impractical or unnecessary to develop a site further in order to provide appropriate and adequate play opportunities. Play equipment is not a critical component of most play spaces.
		The natural environment provides valuable opportunities for play and it may be appropriate for Council to enhance these opportunities at some sites
		An element of risk and the perception of danger is acceptable on the basis that it provides a level of challenge that is appropriate to the intended users. Council acknowledges that providing the sensation of speed and height is an important consideration for play equipment.
6	Promotion	It will be easy to access information about the type and location of play spaces and playgrounds, in Hutt City

<b>Principle</b>		<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Play Facilities</b>		
7	Challenge	<p>Play equipment provides a range of challenge and play experiences within a play space and provide opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Master a particular skill or challenge, such as climbing high</li> <li>▪ Experience different types of movement which influences the development of motor skills, hand/eye coordination, vestibular development (inner ear, balance)</li> <li>▪ Experience the physical environment and the elements it contains eg sand, vegetation, turf, views, sounds, water</li> <li>▪ Socialise positively by interacting with others, cooperating with others</li> <li>▪ Utilise play spaces as settings for imaginative play</li> </ul>
8	Appropriate	<p>Where play spaces contain play equipment, the equipment will be clustered in accordance with age appropriateness</p> <p>General age bands are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1 to 5 years</li> <li>▪ 5 to 12 years</li> <li>▪ 12 to adult</li> </ul>
		<p>Play Facilities for over 12 year olds and Young People will not prioritise play equipment – the emphasis to be on places to socialise, bicycle and skate facilities, hard courts</p>
9	Hierarchy	<p>There will be at least one suburban grade playground in each Ward/Board territory and 1 high quality, extensive, Premier grade playground in the City (Avalon Park)</p>
		<p>Council will make use of opportunities to improve and provide convenient and safe walking and cycling connections to play spaces</p>
10	Design	<p>Play equipment will be located so that it does not prevent the site from being used for other general and popular purposes eg casual kicking a ball around</p>
		<p>Individual playgrounds and play spaces will make the most of their “natural” surroundings, terrain and equipment and they will strive to achieve personalised outcomes</p>
		<p>Play equipment will be selected, located, installed and painted to achieve visual “fit” with the surroundings</p>
		<p>Local culture will considered as part of play space design and development</p>
11	Maintenance	<p>The ongoing cost of maintenance is an important consideration for design and selecting equipment and surfacing</p>
		<p>The cost of maintaining play spaces and playgrounds (new and renewal) will be adequately funded according to the principles of Asset Management planning and the priorities set in Go Outside and Play</p>
		<p>Equipment will be selected and retained on the basis that it is suited to the site and the likely users</p>

<b>Principle</b>		<b>Explanation</b>
12	Safety	New equipment and surfacing will comply with relevant standards which are current at the time of installation – as at 2012 this is primarily NZS 5828:2004
		Playgrounds will be inspected routinely and required maintenance will be attended to promptly
		Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles need to be considered when considering installation of play equipment and play facilities in order to encourage passive surveillance
		Locating playgrounds so that they are visible to the public is a priority
		Smoking and alcohol consumption will be discouraged in and around playgrounds
13	Decision Making	Council will provide the community with opportunities to participate in high level planning for play, site design and decision making.

## **Definitions**

### **Children**

For the purposes of this document, children are those 12 years old and younger.

### **Young People**

For the purposes of this document, young people are those 13 to 24 years old.

### **Play equipment**

For the purposes of this document, play equipment is equipment specifically designed and installed for the purpose of play.

### **Play opportunity**

For the purposes of this document, play opportunity is features, equipment and areas that are capable of hosting play, given the presence of children who want to play.

### **Play Value**

For the purpose of this document, play value refers to the quality of the play opportunities associated with play equipment or play spaces.

### **Shared Playground and Shared Play Space**

For the purposes of this document, a shared playground or play space refers to a playground or area of land that is located on land owned by an organisation other than Council and is made available to the public in accordance with a written agreement. The organisation is most likely to be a public primary school.

### **Play**

The definition of play is as follows”

*Play is the work of children. It consists of those activities performed for self-amusement that have behavioural, social, and psychomotor rewards. It is child-directed, and the rewards come from within the individual child; it is enjoyable and spontaneous.*

Taken from: <http://www.healthofchildren.com/P/Play.html>

Play is essential to the development of a child’s physical, cognitive, emotional and intellectual skills. It is through play that Children learn about themselves and the environment around them. Play can be an individual experience but it may also involve interaction with others.

Play provides opportunities for informal learning through explorations and experimentation. Through exploration children have opportunities for learning and expanding their range of experiences. Clearly the nature of play depends on the age, ability, culture and preferences of the child – they're all different.

Although some play requires no equipment, the range of resources available is likely to influence the way children play.

Play is frequently grouped into four types of play experiences:

- **Physical** – this is play that involves movement. It develops the fine and gross motor skills that are the essential platform for both biomechanical and cognitive development. Actions include climbing, rocking, swinging, running, catching, kicking and balancing.
- **Social and Interactive** – this is play that involves interaction with other children and adults and teaches children how to socialise appropriately and how to work cooperatively with others
- **Imaginative and Dramatic** – this is play in which a child will pretend to be another person (or animal) and will utilise the features of the play space to enact a dramatic role. This type of play encourages creative thinking and enables children to experiment with different roles.
- **Explorative** – this is play in which a child interacts with the physical environment in order to learn about the world around them. It may involve the natural elements of the play space (eg sand, water, plants) or the man made components of the structure (eg metal, timber, rope etc). The manipulation of these materials enables children to develop their sensory skills.

## Play Spaces

The definition of a play space is as follows:

*An area of public open space that provides opportunities for children to experience a range of freely chosen recreation opportunities.*

It is not appropriate for Council to consider that all of its sites will have the play space function as a priority. For example, most of Hutt City Council's reserve land comprises bush reserve. Although Council recognises that play occurs in these bush areas, the primary function of these properties is to conserve habitat and landscape values. Likewise, a good deal of casual playing occurs on sportsgrounds managed by Council but the primary function of these site is to provide playing surfaces for organised sporting codes (training and competition).

Many sites that could host play equipment are already used and valued as play spaces. They contain creeks, vegetation, tracks, turf and other features and adding play equipment may not be warranted.

Not all sites need a playground to be able to function as a play space. In fact, providing a playground may inhibit the use of the site for a wider range of play simply by using up space that can be used for running around, hitting a ball or imaginative play. Playgrounds are generally unattractive and bulky. Deciding whether a playground is necessary requires careful consideration. Several submitters to Go Outside and Play suggested that Council should strive to visually integrate play equipment with sites by improving the choice of colour, materials, and location. Council agrees with this suggestion.

## **Playgrounds**

The definition of a playground is as follows:

*A piece or pieces of play equipment that is designed to provide recreation experiences for children*

Playgrounds, skate parks, hard courts and bike tracks provide valuable opportunities for children and young people. Playing with others helps children and young people learn skills and develop personal attributes that contribute to their personal development and ability to participate positively in our community. Facilities like playgrounds, skate parks, hard courts and bike tracks can improve the liveability of the City and promote a sense of local identity and community.

Physical play in a structured environment is only one way for children and young people to participate in play. Playground equipment often serves as a prop or stage for imaginative play and a centre for social activity.

Maximising the play value of a play space is important. Provision of traditional play equipment is only one consideration. There is world of play opportunity beyond familiar equipment like swings, slides, seesaws and rigid climbing frames.

## **Public Open Space**

“Any area of land or body of water to which the public has physical and/or visual access”.

This is the definition accepted by the Wellington Regional Strategy Open Spaces Working Group. It has also been adopted by the Auckland Regional Growth Forum in the Auckland Regional Open Space Strategy.

Within the context of this document public open space primarily includes neighbourhood reserves that are managed by the Hutt City Council. Play spaces and playgrounds tend to be located on neighbourhood reserves. There are plenty of exceptions and Council recognises that its sportsgrounds, horticultural parks, facility reserves, bush reserves, esplanade and foreshore areas and other sites are public open spaces and they also offer play opportunities.

While they are very important contributors to the extensive network of public open space available to our community, sites managed by the following organisations are outside the scope of this document:

- Department of Conservation eg Rimutaka Forest Park
- Greater Wellington the Regional Council eg the Hutt River, Belmont Regional Park and East Harbour Regional Park
- Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust

Schools have been discussed under the section on shared playgrounds. School grounds are not considered to be public open space.

## **Documents that Influence Council's Provision for Play**

### **An Integrated Vision for Hutt City**

A final version of this document will be released in July 2012 and is contained within the 2012-2022 Long Term Plan. The Integrated Vision for Hutt City sets the foundation for the Long Term Plan. The document has four key work streams; Leisure and Well-being, Growth and Development, Environmental Sustainability and Infrastructure. Leisure and recreation are components of the "Destination and Gateway" and the "Residential Villages" themes. Providing a plan for play spaces and playgrounds supports the Integrated Vision document.

### **Long Term Plan (LTP)**

This document sets the goals, or community outcomes, Council wants to achieve for the City's well being. Alongside community outcomes, the LTP determines the priorities for spending (operational and capital budgets) and sets rates. The LTP is reviewed annually by our elected members following a comprehensive public consultation process.

### **Asset Management Plan**

The objective of the Hutt City Council 2008 Parks and Reserves Asset Management Plan is "To contribute to the achievement of Community Outcomes for Hutt City by providing Parks and Reserves facilities and services to meet the current and future needs of the community in the most cost effective way which is sustainable in the long-term and which complies with regulatory requirements". Theoretically, the LTP allocates funds to achieve the objectives contained in the Asset Management Plan.

The Asset Management Plan:

- Recognises Customer Groups and identifies services they require;
- Sets out Customer Services Standards
- Sets out Activity Service Standards specifically for playgrounds

The Parks and Reserves Asset Management Plan identifies key issues that will drive demand for parks and reserves in Hutt City. The plan suggests that:

“With higher density housing areas increasing within Hutt City there will be an increased need for more playgrounds and open-space to compensate for the compact nature of higher density living. This can be hampered by residents not being amenable to a playground being put into a reserve area they are living next door to.”

“The increased demand for properties in the central city area and in higher value parts of the city where there is minimal undeveloped land available is increasing housing densities (although offset by a reduction in the average number of persons per property). This trend will place greater demand on reserves in those areas.”

“Changes in technology in the parks and reserves industry will have an impact on the provision of future services”. See section on Play Spaces of the Future.

“There is likely to be increasing conflict between different reserve uses due to the diversification of leisure preferences and the trend towards informal recreation.”

“Both real and perceived security problems are negatively impacting on the use of parks. Further measures may need to be incorporated to improve this perception.”

“Recreational trends affect and will continue to affect the amount and type of facilities provided. Planning will need to reflect the trend for unstructured participation in and increasingly diverse range of active and passive recreational activities, particularly in the natural environment.”

The Asset Management Plan identifies all the playgrounds managed by Hutt City. In 2006 Council was responsible for 52 playgrounds. Council now managed 54 playgrounds. The Asset Management Plan will anticipate the proposed addition of playgrounds over the next 20 years.

As at December 2005 Council provided 2.44 playgrounds per 1000 children under 15 years old. This was lower than the national average of 4.67 playgrounds per 1000 children (measured by Yardstick).

In 2007 95% of Hutt City residents were located within 1km (as the crow flies) from a playground. A higher number of playgrounds are provided in the Western Hills to compensate for the hilly terrain and the roading layout.

Playground maintenance is fully funded from rates. Playground capital work (new and maintenance) is funded from a mix of rates and Council's Reserves Purchase and Development Fund.

The Asset Renewal budget in the Parks and Reserves Asset Management Plan was set at \$110,000 annually for 2008/09, increasing to \$130,000 by 2017/18. Funding allocated in the LTP and Annual Plan process approximately matches



this. Several major renewal projects for playgrounds were identified in the Asset Management Plan. Most of these have not been funded.

Implementing Go Outside and Play and the Parks and Reserves Asset Management Plan cannot be funded from existing budgets. In June 2012 Council officers advised the Community Plan Committee that implementing Go Outside and Play would require additional funds for renewals and new capital development and to treat deferred maintenance.

Playground equipment and safety surfacing is straight line depreciated. Council policy is to value all playground and surfacing assets at original/historic cost, less accumulated depreciation.

## **City of Lower Hutt Operative District Plan**

The District Plan regulates development in Hutt City. The District Plan recognises that play equipment is frequently located on land in the Recreation Activity Areas within the District Plan.

Playgrounds are permitted activities in the General Recreation Activity Area because they fall under 'recreation activities and ancillary activities' under Rule 7A 2.1 (a). Permitted activities need to meet the permitted activity conditions in Rule 7A 2.1.1.

The Petone Foreshore Special Recreation and the Passive Recreation Activity Area list informal recreation activities as permitted. There is not a definition of informal recreation in the District Plan. However, the definition of recreation activity includes casual recreation (which must be either the same as or similar to informal recreation).

Although playgrounds may be considered informal recreation, which is permitted in these activity areas – the playground structures require resource consent. This is because the District Plan seeks to manage the effects on the environment of building and structures in these more sensitive areas.

In summary:

General Recreation – playgrounds permitted.  
Petone Foreshore – playgrounds non-complying.  
Seaview Marina – playgrounds permitted.  
Hutt Park – playgrounds permitted.  
River Recreation – playgrounds discretionary.  
Passive Recreation – playgrounds discretionary.

The District Plan makes provision for Council to collect Reserve Financial Contributions to address the effects of intensification that results from land development. These contributions are made in the form of land or cash. Cash is directed into Council's Reserve Purchase and Development Fund. A number of Parks and Reserves capital projects are funded or partially funded from the Reserves Purchase and Development fund, including play spaces and

playgrounds. These projects are identified in Activity 4 of the LTP and Annual Plan.

### **Hutt City Council Reserves Strategic Directions 2003**

This strategic document sets out a series of principles that are used to prioritise development and management of Council's reserve network. Go Outside and Play fills out some detail for Principle 2 "Relationship with other providers" and Principle 3 "Quality Facilities and Services".

The Reserves Strategic Directions contains a number of statements that have implications for play opportunities. The key one is:

"there is a need to consider alternatives to playground provision such as imaginative play opportunities in more natural settings. Imaginative versus physical play needs to be better balanced when considering recreational needs of youngsters. Provision for playground equipment is becoming increasingly regulated and current standards curb Council's ability to offer a wide range of challenging and interesting artificial play." Page 22

This statement was an important driver for producing Go Outside and Play.

### **Active Recreation and Sport Strategy 2007 – 2012**

This strategic document primarily focuses on how the Hutt City Council will contribute towards meeting the active recreation and sport needs of Hutt City. The Strategy recognises that Council is a significant provider of open space and understands that provision of open space brings many benefits to residents and visitors. The strategy contemplates Council's position in terms of being able to improve physical activity levels. In particular, the Strategy sets out:

#### **"GOAL 3 – EFFECTIVE OPEN SPACE AND FACILITIES**

A network of open spaces and facilities across the city that enable and encourage participation in active recreation and sport."

### **2010 Hutt Valley Youth Survey**

This survey provides a comprehensive view of the wellbeing of young people (12 to 24 year olds) in Hutt City and Upper Hutt City. While young people are mainly happy in our city they have identified a lack of places to hang out and a lack of things to do as important issues. Planning and delivery of some Council play spaces and playgrounds as proposed in Go Outside and Play may improve the existing situation, with which young people appear to be a little dissatisfied.

## **Reserve Management Plans**

The Reserves Act 1977 requires Council to provide Reserve Management Plans for reserves. This involves public consultation and approval (by formal resolution) from the elected members of Council. Reserve Management Plans establish the desired mix of uses and values for reserves and set policy for day to day management of reserves. In Hutt City, playgrounds are located in a number of reserve management plans, namely:

- Amenity Horticulture Reserve Management Plan
- Bush Reserves Management Plan
- Esplanade and Foreshore Reserve Management Plan
- Neighbourhood Reserve Management Plan
- Sportsground Reserves Management Plan

## **Hutt City Council Bylaws**

The Hutt City Council Bylaw 2007, Parks and Reserves, regulates activities and behaviour on reserves. Most playgrounds are located on reserve.

The Hutt City Council Bylaw 2005, Dog Control, prohibits dogs from a number of sites, including “any children’s playground within the District”. Note that leashed dogs are permitted in most play spaces but not in the playground area. Some play spaces also function as dog exercise areas. This means that dogs are allowed off leash so long as they are under constant supervision and control.

## **Every Child Thrives, Belongs, Achieves – The Green Paper for Vulnerable Children, 2011**

“The New Zealand Government is concerned about the number of children who have childhoods that make it unlikely that they will thrive, belong and achieve.” This discussion document outlines “a number of ideas on how to improve leadership for vulnerable children, some policy changes, and some changes to how services are delivered”. This is loosely related to Go Outside and Play because by supporting play, Council is able to have a positive impact on children and this includes vulnerable children. The focus on vulnerable children partially justifies the Go Outside and Play principle of “Priority for Provision”.

<http://www.childrensactionplan.govt.nz/>

In 2011 the government released a green paper and called for submissions. A white paper will be released in 2012.

## **New Zealand Standard - NZS 5828:2004 Playground Equipment and Surfacing:**

The standard provides technical standards that identify minimum levels of performance acceptable to the community of interest. It covers features like: fall heights, dimensions to avoid entrapment, requirements for safety rails and standards for safety surfacing under equipment. Compliance with the Standard is not compulsory but Hutt City Council’s approach is that new playground

equipment will comply with the Standard. If the standard is superseded, Hutt City Council will comply with the new standard.

### **Summary Offences Act 1981 Section 10B: Leaving a child without reasonable supervision and care**

The Act states that “every person is liable to a fine not exceeding \$2,000 who, being a parent or guardian or a person for the time being having the care of a child under the age of 14 years, leaves that child, without making reasonable provision for the supervision and care of the child, for a time that is unreasonable or under conditions that are unreasonable having regard to all the circumstances.”

In 2011 the office of the Children’s Commissioner advised that “It is important that children do attend parks and have fun there. It is up to the parent/guardian of the child to ensure their appropriate supervision. Parents can ensure that the park is safe and the equipment is maintained well, that there is nothing hazardous for the age of their children such as streams and pools etc, that there are no dangers for their children getting to the park such as crossing railways lines or busy roads. Parents may wish to give their children mobile phones for easy contact”.

“There is no case law that we know of regarding leaving children on their own under 14 at a park. If there was, the case would relate to the responsibility of the parents, not the City Council.”

### **Healthy Open Spaces – a summary of the impact of open spaces on health and wellbeing**

Healthy Open Spaces was released by Regional Public Health, Lower Hutt in 2010. It provides a collection of information that illustrates that there is a close connection between health outcomes and the provision of open space. The urbanised nature of New Zealand’s population and increasingly population density is discussed.

Regional Public Health states that:

“healthy urban planning must include a focus on accessible, quality urban open spaces in low socio-economic neighbourhoods”; and  
“the use of open space for physical activity is particularly important for children and young people”.

These statements are backed by studies in New Zealand and overseas.

Regional Public Health states that “parks in New Zealand have the uniqueness of being reasonably safe and accessible as well as natural (including elements of nature such as trees and plants) and so have great capacity to provide relevant space for children’s (sic) and adolescents”.

<http://www.huttvalleydhb.org.nz/RPH/Resource.aspx?ID=1351>

## Local Scene

The number of residents 0 to 14, 15 to 39 and 40 to 64 years old are declining in Hutt City. In line with New Zealand overall, Hutt City has an aging population and the forecast is for this to continue beyond 2031. The number of households is increasing moderately in Hutt City but the number of residents per household is decreasing. Projections indicate that population density will increase by 2030 and this will be most noticeable in the Central and Eastern Wards.

## Local Trends

The population of Hutt City is expected to increase from 103,500 to 105,100 by 2031 – an additional 1600 people.\* Ethnic diversity is increasing in Hutt City and this has implications for delivering appealing open spaces. There are changes of lifestyle among different generations and this has implications for delivering appropriate open spaces and activities.

\* Based on medium projections

The number of residents per household is decreasing and this increases the demand for housing. The number of households is expected to increase by approximately 400 between 2011 and 2031. The potential for new, greenfield type subdivision in Hutt City is limited. Demand for properties in the Central Ward is increasing (and is likely to continue) but the supply of undeveloped land is minimal.

“Continued population growth, expansion of built areas and a move to infill and multiple unit housing has created a new range of roles for the original green spaces. These include providing a space for outdoor recreation and sports participation, as well as providing a ‘pleasant and healthy’ environment with benefits for mental and social wellbeing.” Regional Public Health 2010.

Some areas that have been set aside as reserve/public open spaces are being considered as potential sites for residential development. This may reduce Council’s ability to supply adequate open space that is appropriate and well located. Between 2007 and 2012 Council has reviewed its requirements for land managed as reserve as part of the Land Review Project. Implementing Go Outside and Play may result in relocating or removing playgrounds but this is unlikely to release land from Hutt City Council ownership.

In terms of playgrounds, the Western Ward fares best. The Western Ward has the lowest number of residents, is less densely developed, has low deprivation and has the highest per child provision of playgrounds .

In line with New Zealand overall:

- The awareness of need for personal health and active lifestyles is growing but the average New Zealander is becoming more sedentary and getting fatter.

- There is a growth in the private sector provision of recreation services - “Pay for Play” and this includes children’s facilities and activities but this is not affordable for everyone.
- The popularity of individual or small group orientated leisure activities is increasing.
- The balance between organised and casual sports and recreation is changing and casual participation in recreation is growing
- There is increasing competition for people’s time from different sports and leisure bodies

2006 Census data (Statistics New Zealand) and the 2006 Deprivation Index (Ministry of Health) provides useful local insight.

### Population overall, by ward

Ward Code (2006 Areas)	Ward Description	2006 Census, Census Usually Resident Population Count	Number of playgrounds	Number of children 14 yrs and under	Ratio of playgrounds/population	Ratio of playgrounds/child population (14 yrs and under)
04601	Western Ward	12402	13	2685	1 per 954 people	1 per 206 children
04602	Harbour Ward	17232	12	3432	1 per 1436 people	1 per 286 children
04603	Northern Ward	15288	9	3954	1 per 1698 people	1 per 439 children
04604	Central Ward	18642	3	3717	1 per 6214 people	1 per 1239 children
04605	Eastern Ward	16923	8	4128	1 per 2155 people	1 per 516 children
04606	Wainuiomata Ward	17214	9	4428	1 per 1912 people	1 per 492 children

### Population of 0 to 14 year olds

The ten highest populations of 14 year olds and under in Hutt City, by area units, are located in (ranked, Naenae North highest):

Naenae North  
 Eastbourne  
 Glendale  
 Waterloo East  
 Naenae South  
 Taita South  
 Taita North  
 Hutt Central  
 Homedale East  
 Maungaraki

## **0 to 14 year olds as a proportion of the population**

The 9 areas where 0 to 14 year olds make up the greatest proportion of the overall population in Hutt City, by area units, are located in (ranked, Taita North highest):

Taita North  
Glendale  
Delaney  
Taita South  
Naenae North  
Parkway  
Homedale East  
Naenae South  
Arakura

## **Population Density**

The most densely populated areas of Hutt City (by number of households per km<sup>2</sup>\* in 2006 were:

Waterloo West  
Epuni West

\* based on projections from 2006 census data

Based on medium population projections, the most densely populated areas of the city in 2031 are likely to be:

Waterloo West  
Epuni West  
Avalon East.

Note that these figures do not anticipate any increase in the Lower Hutt CBD residential population that may develop as a result of Council's "Making Places" initiative or Plan Change 12.

It is important that Council understands where the change in population density is likely to be greatest. This may influence the quantity and nature of open spaces that may be required in those areas by 2031. By adopting Go Outside and Play Council has indicated that providing an additional playground in the Central Ward is a priority.

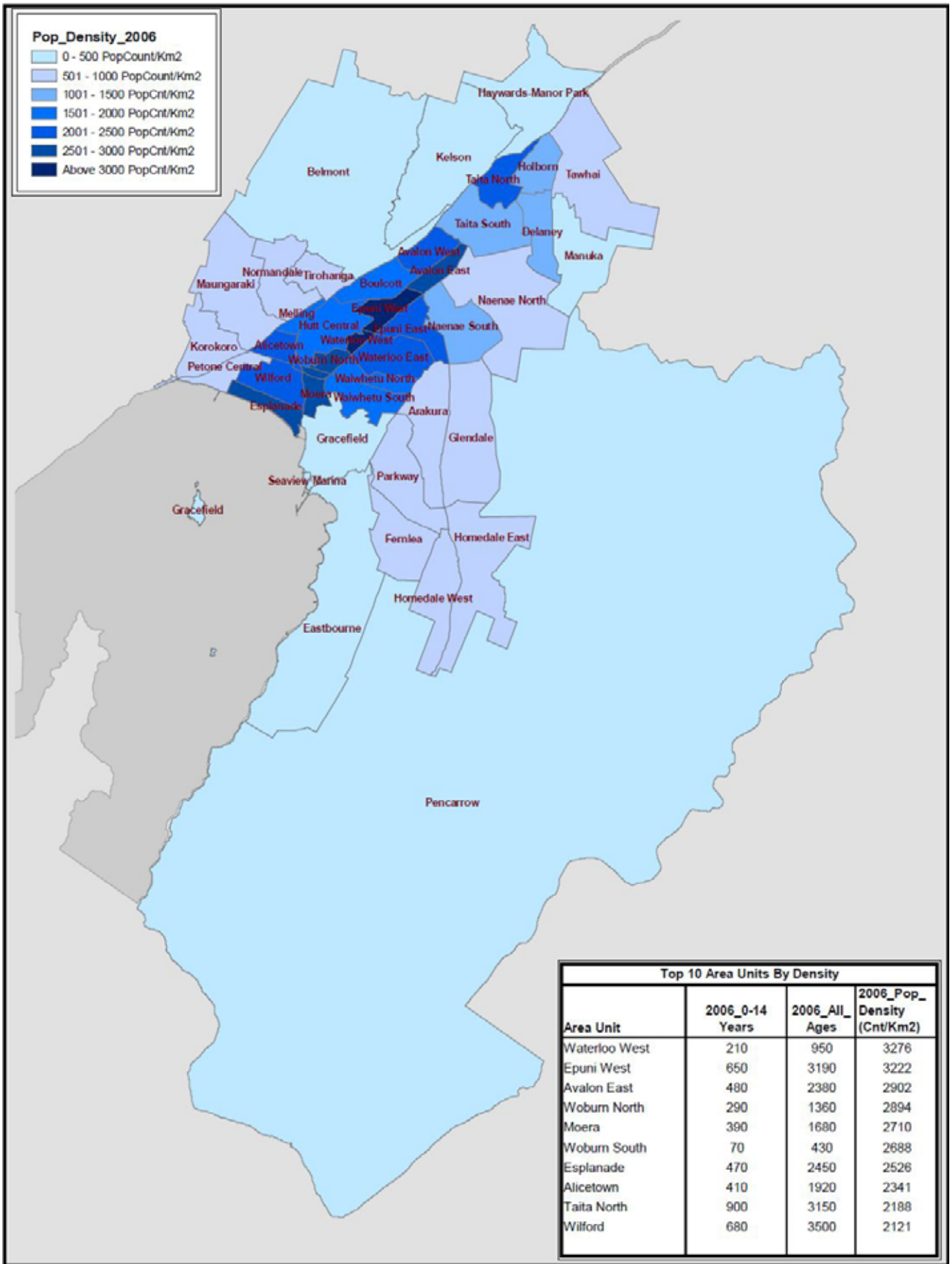
At this time, information about population density is provided for the general population. It is not possible to identify 0 to 14 year olds in the projections.

## **Deprivation**

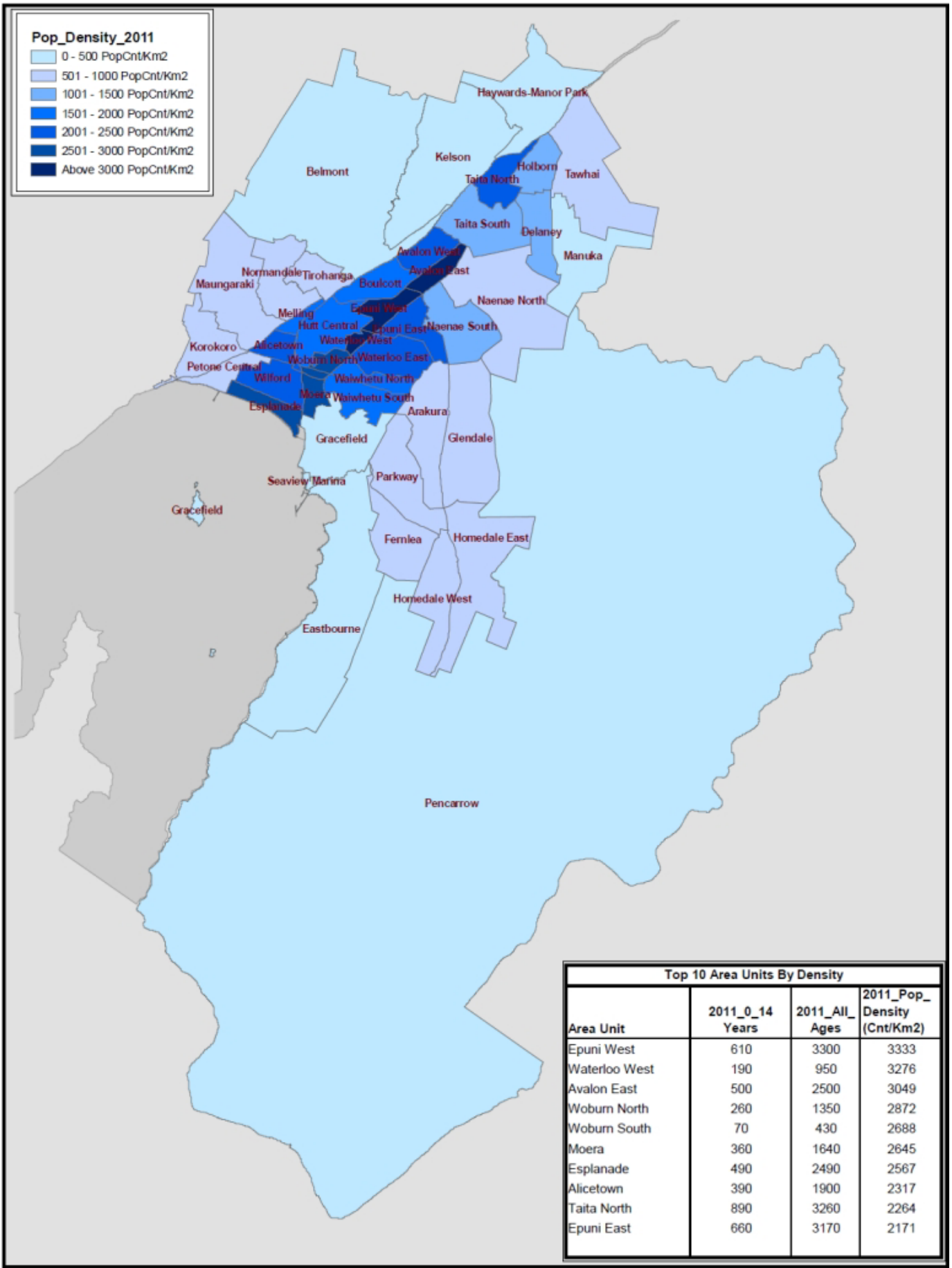
The most deprived areas of Hutt City (by Ministry of Health Deprivation Index 2006) are located in:

Taita North  
Taita South  
Naenae North  
Naenae South

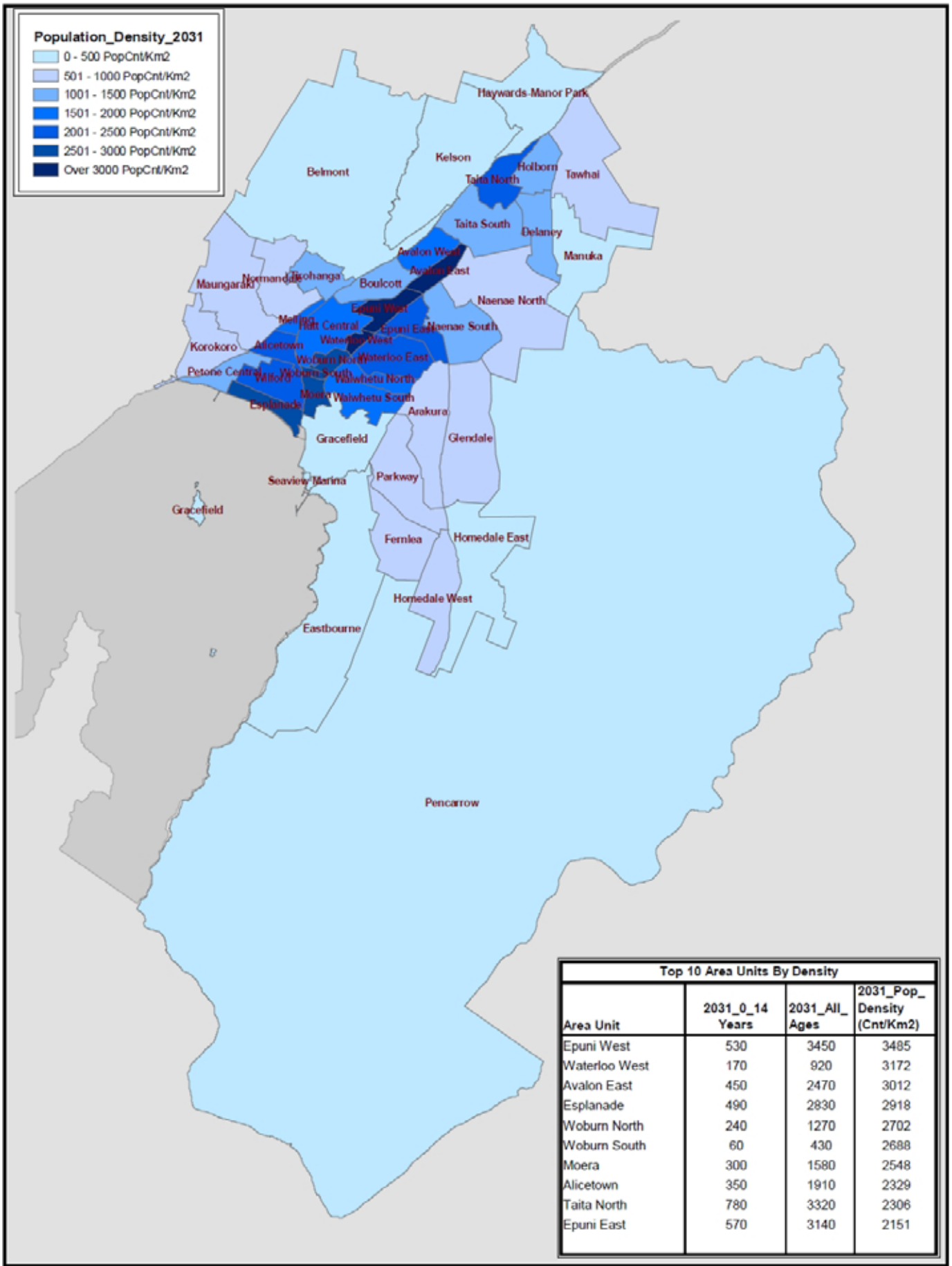




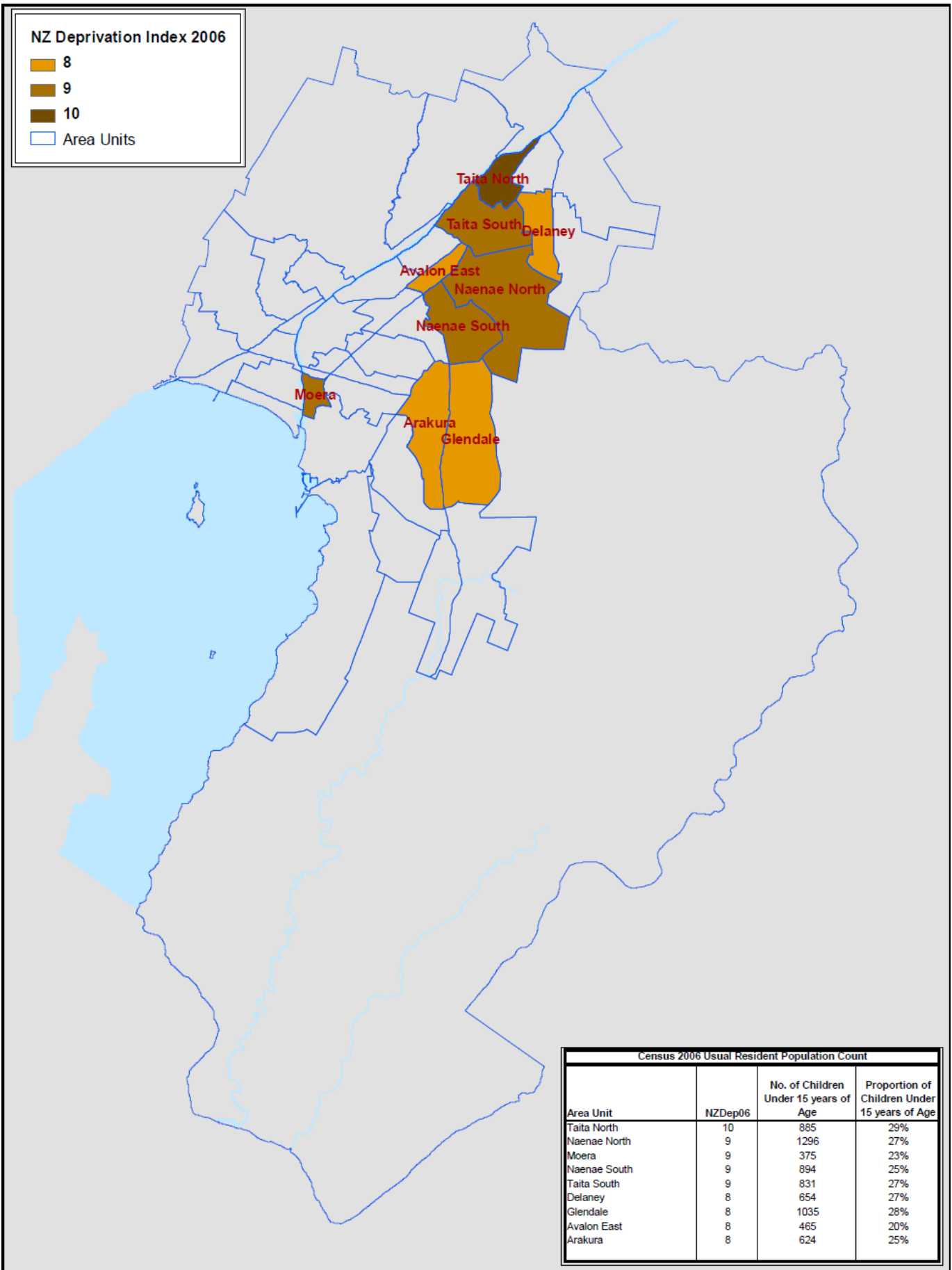
**Population Density 2006**



**Projected Population Density to 2011**



**Projected Population Density to 2031**



**Nine Most Deprived Area Units**

## Providing Play Spaces

A key driver in developing Go Outside and Play is the need to improve the performance of existing sites in terms of their ability to provide public outdoor spaces for children, young people and adults to interact positively. Overall, the City is well provided in terms of quantity of open space. While much of this is managed as bush reserve, a fair proportion can be easily accessed by the community within or just on the perimeter of the suburban areas. There are only a few areas where Council may consider there is a shortfall of public open space.

Examples of Council managed areas with good play opportunities are:

<b>Play spaces</b>	<b>Examples</b>
beaches	Days Bay Beach Petone Beach
stream and river banks	Waiwhetu Stream banks along Riverside Drive Rotary Park
bush reserves	Jubilee Park Hayward Scenic Reserve
neighbourhood reserves	Hugh Sinclair Park Rowan Street Reserve Walter Nash Park
horticultural parks	Speldhurst Park Percy Scenic Reserve
sports grounds (outside booked games and training)	Te Whiti Park HW Shortt Park

In neighbourhood reserves there is a lot of scope to improve play opportunities by targeting developments that improve the overall appearance of sites in order to make sites more inviting, and consequently increase the number of visitors.

In terms of developing sites, it is important to consider the level of development that may be appropriate. High levels of development and provision of a lot of equipment is not necessarily desirable. We need to leave plenty of space for running around, bowling and hitting balls, playing chasing games and the like. We don't want to provide equipment at the expense of stifling other types of play and reducing the pleasure this kind of activity brings some children.

We should not underestimate the ability of local children to enjoy undeveloped or "underdeveloped" public open spaces in their neighbourhoods. This point is reinforced by Regional Public Health in Healthy Open Spaces where the idea of "natural" settings as being therapeutic is covered.



Crawlie in hand - cousins, Max and Jakob McGuinness, in Belmont

Children in Belmont know where to find glow worms and crawlies and where to make huts. Kids in Petone know where to look for skinks on the beach. Along the Waiwhetu Stream wading birds and eels draw children and their families outside. Across the City, many children are well aware of public open spaces where they can play and be physically active in their neighbourhood.

When Council is considering the possibility of developing or redeveloping public open spaces it is important to consider how developmentally appropriate opportunities for play and physical activity can be accommodated. A traditional playground may not be the answer. It's definitely not a matter of one size fits all.

## **Providing for play includes providing for adults**

“Open Spaces, and especially green spaces, promote healthy behaviours by providing an accessible, affordable and enjoyable place to be active”. Regional Public Health, 2010

Council is committed to providing areas for all members of the community, including adults, to recreate in. Improving and maintaining the appeal of sites is important.

Play spaces need to appeal to adults in order to improve the use of sites. If adults enjoy the site and are comfortable being there it is more likely that parents and caregivers will bring children to sites more frequently. It's a self fulfilling prophecy.

Not all adults want to watch children playing; they want to play too. Council does not specifically provide outdoor play or exercise equipment for adults. Although Council prioritises play equipment for under 12 year olds, adults make use of senior play equipment. They also negotiate junior play equipment while supervising. Adults instigate, lead and participate in activities such as kicking a ball around, bowling balls, investigating wildlife, collecting things and role playing – the activities don't usually require any special equipment, just the site.

A quality open space that is also used as a play space is likely to provide a range of recreation opportunities. Many public open spaces managed by Council are large enough to provide a setting that will encourage active lifestyles across a diverse range of ages and communities. Large open Spaces that contain a wide range of amenities are more likely to appeal to a wider range of people.

More attractive open spaces are more likely to be popular. Attractive vegetation and little evidence of litter and graffiti make it more likely that open spaces will be popular. Attractive parks, as opposed to under developed or empty open spaces, are more likely to stimulate activity. The size of open spaces influences the types of activities that take place.

## **Play Spaces as Active Connections**

Play spaces often provide a physical connection or route through neighbourhoods. While they are not managed as a transport route, they function as one and this is desirable. Walkers and cyclists increase use and provide surveillance. Well planted and nicely paved play spaces can provide attractive routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

## **Fenced Playgrounds**

Provision of fencing at playgrounds is considered on a site by site basis. In general, fencing playgrounds that target under 5s is a priority where separation from traffic is poor. Traditional fencing may not be required. Bollards, planting

and carefully placed seating may provide a practical alternative to fencing. Fencing does not reduce the need for adult supervision of small children.

It is important that the location and materials used for fencing and other barriers allow the site to be seen by the public.

## **Maintaining Play Spaces and Playgrounds**

Council currently provides 54 playgrounds citywide. The number of play spaces is vast. In terms of mapping for Go Outside and Play, play spaces are comprised mainly of neighbourhood reserves, beaches and horticultural parks. Council recognises that sportsgrounds, tracks and bush reserves provide valuable outdoor play opportunities and so do sites managed by Greater Wellington Regional Council and the Department of Conservation.

Council's playgrounds are inspected and maintained fortnightly by a local contractor in accordance with the specifications in Council's Contract for the Maintenance of Playgrounds. The contractor is based in Petone and holds a range of stock items for carrying out common repairs. The current contract expires in 2012. The new contract addresses key principles from Go Outside and Play and will be tendered in late 2012.

Council's neighbourhood reserves, horticultural parks and bush reserves are maintained under contract by Downer NZ Ltd. The gardening and mowing at play spaces is maintained to specified contract standards. Sites required to perform similar functions are standardised citywide. Note that the site conditions influence the final presentation, particularly drainage. Typically sites containing playgrounds are mown at Grade 3 (turf between 40 and 80mm high).

Weed control in play spaces and within playgrounds, including amongst some safety matting, is part of ordinary maintenance work. This complies with Council's Reserve Management Plans. Council tolerates a limited amount of chemical weed control in play spaces and this is normally restricted to glyphosate.

Council's playgrounds and safety surfaces are in good working order although some debate about the value of some of the playgrounds occurred in the Go Outside and Play consultation process. Several playgrounds have exceeded the expected lifespan and now require frequent maintenance. Overall, Council's playgrounds look tired and this reduces their appeal.

Old equipment normally requires more running repairs. For some special pieces of equipment this may be justified. The tractors at Riddiford Gardens and Karaka Park are well used but they have a limited life. There were no playground standards at the time they were installed. The tractors do not comply with the current Playground Standards and once they are removed it is unlikely that Council will replace them. Council has determined that the Stokes Valley Road playground will not be renewed at the end of its useful life.

Vandalism and theft are the single biggest factors that reduce the life of a playground. For example, the playground at Antrim Crescent is approximately 5



years old but it appears to be considerably older and it is unlikely to last 15 years. This is attributable to the theft of matting and chains, smashed decks, damaged plastic fittings and severed and stolen swings.

It is important that play equipment is selected with the site considerations (high use, coastal climate and likely vandalism) in mind. Purchasing the right equipment is important but managing vandalism, graffiti and theft is too. At Antrim Crescent, the solution could be to replace this playground with heavy duty products, improve the overall appeal of the site while working alongside local residents.

The idea of removing equipment can be hard news to deliver. The community tends to believe that more is better and that removing equipment is downgrading a local site. As a result new pieces of play equipment have been added to sites at faster rate than old equipment has been removed. This can be a problem. At small sites the area occupied by play equipment expands and the areas left for other activities shrink. Also, older equipment tends to require more maintenance and if the equipment has been superseded by new additions this maintenance may no longer be justified. In summary, it is a poor idea for playgrounds to keep expanding. Old items need to be removed to make room for new equipment physically and in the renewal budget.

Council's preference for most playground renewals is to remove whole playgrounds at the end of their useful lives and to replace them with a whole new playground.

In general a playground renewal is not an upgrade (say from neighbourhood basic to neighbourhood category). Nor is it an expansion. Essentially a playground of similar value is provided.

## **Shared playgrounds**

Schools provide open space (albeit not quite the same as public open space) and playgrounds. Schools are increasingly seen by the public as a key community resource.

Schools in Hutt City were asked to respond to a simple survey about their grounds as part of Go Outside and Play. It appears that most schools are happy for the public to use their grounds and playgrounds outside school hours. From Council's perspective this is very positive. At this time the arrangements that would suit Council and schools have not been worked out and the cost of doing this is not known either.

Kelson School has made a financial contribution towards upgrading equipment in the playgrounds next to their sites. Because the school is located right next door to a Council playground the Taieri Crescent reserve is almost treated as extensions to the school grounds.

Kelson School has worked with Council to improve the existing playground rather than install their own equipment. The result is that this playground is more

substantial than what would be provided if the school and Council were not neighbours. This has implications for maintenance. Playgrounds on sites alongside schools require more maintenance than similar equipment in other areas. This is simply a result of wear and tear from being play on frequently.

Prior to 2012 Council did not seek any financial contributions towards playground maintenance from schools currently. Conversely, Council did not currently make any financial contributions to schools that allow the public access to their grounds. Hutt City Council has not established any formal arrangements for shared playgrounds with schools. In the past Council has provided second hand play equipment to Taita Central School and Eastern Hutt School.

Working with willing schools may provide some opportunities to provide and promote play spaces in areas where Council provision is low and where Council sites are isolated by busy roads. In general, school playground equipment will be unsuitable for under 5 year olds.

After considering submissions and advice from officers, Council has agreed that working with schools to formalise access and share resources could improve the range of play opportunities for some neighbourhoods.

Partnerships with schools will be considered on a case-by-case basis, as both need and opportunity arises. Wellington City Council has developed a model for shared playgrounds and it is likely that Hutt City Council could use this as a starting point. If they are willing, Council is especially interested in working with the following schools:

- Boulcott School
- Hutt Central School
- Kelson School
- Maungaraki School
- Maranatha School
- Normandale School
- Petone Central School
- Pomare School
- Tui Glen School
- Wainuiomata School
- Waterloo School

## **School Playgrounds**

While not a substitute for fully publicly accessible playgrounds in Council-owned properties, their role in providing play opportunities should be noted. Many schools in the City allow (or at least do not object to) their grounds being used by the public outside school hours.

Rotary has provided significant assistance to Rata Street School in Naenae. This has resulted in a new school playground.

In 2011 Epuni School had the Tremendous Makeover, which included landscaping, seats and paths. This was an initiative of Rotary Club of Hutt Valley and Project Crimson. In 2010 Rotary was responsible for making over gardens at Pomare School.

A number of school closures in this City have demonstrated that there is risk in relying on schools as providers of open space. Schools do not have a mandate to provide their grounds or their play equipment to the general public.

The quality of school playground equipment and its inspection is variable. Council does not promote the use of school grounds or playgrounds as an alternative to Council facilities at the moment but if schools are willing this may be beneficial.

### **Alternative Providers**

This document concentrates on the public open spaces that contain playgrounds and play opportunities which are managed by Council.

Council is only one provider of playgrounds and play spaces in the City. Schools provide a significant number of sites, play opportunities and play equipment. Housing New Zealand provide a large playground in the grounds of the Jackson Street Flats in Petone and another playground at Farmer Crescent. Two commercial, indoor playgrounds are provided (1 in Alicetown, 1 in Seaview) and McDonald's Family Restaurants have playgrounds in their grounds in Lower Hutt (High Street) and Petone.

## Hierarchy of Playgrounds in a City-Wide Context

Sites offering good play opportunities or with potential to offer good play opportunities will be classified into three categories for the purpose of this plan. Council is responsible for a large number of sites which offer a wide range of recreation opportunities. This list is really only a guide for the purpose of approximately sorting.

### Categories of Playgrounds

Prior to 2012 there was not a system for classifying or ranking playgrounds or sites offering good play opportunities.

	Site	Play Equipment
<b>Neighbourhood basic</b> eg Sun Valley Reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Close enough to visit on foot or cycle easily a couple of times a week – can be a spontaneous decision</li> <li>▪ Attracts children and their families from the local neighbourhood</li> <li>▪ Equipment provides enough interest for less than 30 minutes of play</li> <li>▪ Proximity and scale of nearby playgrounds likely to be more comprehensive</li> </ul>	
	Site is probably small or very small  Site likely to have other amenities eg lawn, plantings or bush edge	Simple equipment – probably just a swing set with matting or bark
<b>neighbourhood</b> eg Holborn Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Close enough to visit on foot or cycle easily a couple of times a week - can be a spontaneous decision, like walking to the dairy for an iceblock</li> <li>▪ Attracts children and their families from the local neighbourhood</li> <li>▪ Sites which provide enough interest for 30 minutes play</li> </ul>	
	Smaller sites which provides a small range of recreational opportunities – perhaps only a playground  Limited provision of amenities	A small collection of simple play equipment
<b>suburban</b> eg CL Bishop Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Close enough to visit on foot or cycle once a fortnight</li> <li>▪ Likely to be a planned expedition and may require crossing busy roads</li> <li>▪ Site is interesting and varied enough to hold interest for longer than 30 minutes</li> </ul>	

	<b>Site</b>	<b>Play Equipment</b>
	<p>Larger site which offers a variety of recreational activities eg open grass area, bush, trees, beach</p> <p>Site likely to appeal to a range of ages 0 to adult.</p> <p>Site functions as a community meeting place</p> <p>Ideally is located near decent toilets, shops and café or dairy</p> <p>Site provides amenities for caregivers eg planting, paths, specimen trees and seating for caregivers</p>	<p>Provides a range of play equipment which is likely to target more than one age group</p> <p>Under 5 equipment is clustered separately and may be fenced</p> <p>Council playgrounds that are expected to perform as extensions to school grounds should qualify as suburban</p>
<p><b>premier</b> eg Avalon Park</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Most Hutt City users will drive to the site, 3 or 4 times a year</li> <li>▪ Likely to be a planned expedition for children and their families from Hutt City and within the Wellington Region</li> <li>▪ Large groups may meet at the site, especially at weekends</li> </ul>	
	<p>A large, well designed, high profile site</p> <p>The site will contain a wide range of excellent recreation opportunities</p> <p>The site is attractive and presented to a high standard</p> <p>Site provides high quality amenities for caregivers eg planting, paths, specimen trees and seating for caregivers</p> <p>There is decent toilets and ample car parking</p> <p>Food and drinks (hot and cold) are available.</p> <p>Food can be cooked and eaten at the site by visitors</p>	<p>A first rate playground which is likely to attract residents from across Hutt City and also the Wellington Region</p> <p>Will contain a comprehensive range of outstanding play equipment</p> <p>Children and Young People are provided for</p>

While it is useful to sort play spaces and playgrounds into categories, the variety of sites (especially the sizes) and existing provision influences the proposed works significantly.

Ideally the play space and playground will both fit into the same category. For example, a suburban playground will be located in a site that meets most of the requirements for a suburban play space. It is not about the maintenance of the equipment. The idea is to match the expectations users have of suburban playgrounds and play spaces with the services and facilities at the site, eg the provision of toilets, the size of the site and the variety of equipment.

Council will renew playgrounds in accordance with the Action Plan contained in Go Outside and Play. Council has determined the categories for individual playgrounds and the appropriate level of funding (estimated in 2012 dollars for renewals is approximately:

- Neighbourhood Basic       \$10,000
- Neighbourhood               \$45,000
- Suburban                       \$125,000

<b>Playground</b>	<b>Ward/Board</b>	<b>Category</b>
Antrim Crescent	Wainuiomata	suburban
Arahiwi Grove - proposed	Western	neighbourhood basic
Avalon Park	Central	premier
Arakura Park	Wainuiomata	neighbourhood
Banksia Grove	Western	neighbourhood
Belmont Domain	Western	suburban
Central Ward – proposed, possibly at Epuni Community Reserve	Central	neighbourhood
Civic/Riddiford Gardens	Central	neighbourhood
CL Bishop Park	Eastbourne	suburban
Cleary Street (open Polytechnic of NZ)	Eastern	neighbourhood
Farmer Crescent – 2 PGs	Northern	neighbourhood basic
Godley Street	Eastern	neighbourhood
Greenwood Park	Eastbourne	neighbourhood
Hillary Court	Northern T	neighbourhood
Holborn Drive	Northern T	neighbourhood
Holly Grove	Western	neighbourhood
Hugh Sinclair Park	Wainuiomata	suburban
HW Shortt Park	Eastbourne	neighbourhood basic
James Grove (GWRC land)	Northern SV	neighbourhood
Judd Crescent	Eastern	neighbourhood
Karaka Park	Wainuiomata	neighbourhood
Korokoro Road (road reserve)	Petone	neighbourhood basic
Lions Park	Petone	suburban
London Road (road reserve)	Petone	neighbourhood
Magnolia Grove	Western	neighbourhood
Major Drive	Western	neighbourhood
Mary Crowther Park	Wainuiomata	neighbourhood
Mary Huse Grove	Western	neighbourhood

<b>Playground</b>	<b>Ward/Board</b>	<b>Category</b>
Matuhi Street	Western	neighbourhood
Maungaraki Road	Western	neighbourhood
Maungaraki School	Petone	suburban
Meadowbank Reserve - proposed	Western	neighbourhood
Moera Community Reserve	Harbour P	suburban
Naenae Park, Seddon Street	Eastern	neighbourhood
Ngaturi Park	Wainuiomata	neighbourhood
Orr Crescent	Central	neighbourhood basic
Parkway Family Playground	Wainuiomata	suburban
Park Hill Reserve	Western	neighbourhood
Pekanga Road (road reserve)	Western	neighbourhood
Petone Recreation Ground	Petone	neighbourhood
Pomare Playground, High Street	Northern	neighbourhood
Purser Grove	Eastern	neighbourhood
Scholefield Street	Petone	neighbourhood basic
Sladden Park	Petone	suburban
Speldhurst Park	Northern SV	suburban
Stockdale Street	Wainuiomata	neighbourhood
Stokes Valley Road	Northern SV	remove
Sun Valley Reserve	Wainuiomata	neighbourhood basic
Taieri Crescent Reserve	Western	suburban
Te Whiti Grove	Petone	neighbourhood basic
Te Whiti Park	Eastern	neighbourhood
Tom James Park	Northern SV	neighbourhood
Victoria Street Reserve	Western	neighbourhood
Viewmont Drive	Western	neighbourhood
Wagon Road	Northern SV	Neighbourhood
Walter Nash Park	Northern T	suburban
Trafalgar Square Playground	Eastern	neighbourhood basic

## **Proposed additional playgrounds**

- Arahiwi Grove
- Central Ward
- Meadowbank Reserve

Funding for these new capital items will need to be approved through the Long Term Plan process. By adopting Go Outside and Play, Council has tentatively indicated that these new playgrounds are a priority.

## **Proposed removal and relocations**

Over time, as playgrounds reach the end of their lives, it is proposed that Council phases out some playgrounds on the basis that they contribute little in terms of play opportunity or they are close to other sites with playgrounds or they would be more useful if relocated nearby.

Jubilee Park - remove ramp in 2012, replace with another facility eg half court

Melling Skate Facility – relocate prior to SH2/Melling Bridge works

Ngaturi Park –relocate to Wood Street reserve

Stokes Valley Road - remove

Victoria Street Reserve Skate Ramp - remove

It is possible that other sites will also require consideration.



## **Developing and managing a premier playground at Avalon Park**

At this time, Avalon Park is the most obvious location for a premier playground. The site already contains a significant quantity of play equipment, toilets, lawns, a bike track, a small skate facility and it is a spacious site in a suitable location. Significant development is required if the site and its playground equipment is to meet expectations of a regional or destination playground.

Developing a premier playground is estimated to cost approximately \$1 million as a one off project. Staging the development will allow this cost to be spread. In addition, Avalon Park (the grounds) requires upgrading to become a premier destination.

Note that the consultation process associated with this draft document provides an opportunity to debate the merits of upgrading Avalon Park. Council has already committed \$150,000 to upgrading an additional play feature at the south end of the park in 2011/12. There is additional funding tentatively allocated to Avalon Park for 2013/14, 2015/16 and 2017/18.

In 2012 Council will develop and adopt a Reserve Management Plan, which will include a conceptual landscape design, for Avalon Park. This will be based on the result of professional advice from a landscape architect and community consultation.

There is no funding allocated to improving the grounds at Avalon Park. Once the conceptual design work has been completed it will be possible to develop cost estimates and a programme of staged works. These will be used to seek funding through the Annual Plan process.

## **Trialling a neighbourhood hub at Purser Grove Reserve**

Briony Carnachan made a submission about the Draft version of Go Outside and Play in 2011. Briony suggested that Council should consider developing Purser Grove Reserve as a model where Council and the local community work together to improve the appeal, popularity and range of functions at reserves. Briony described a home grown approach to community recreation in order to expand the range of opportunities and social connections within the neighbourhood.

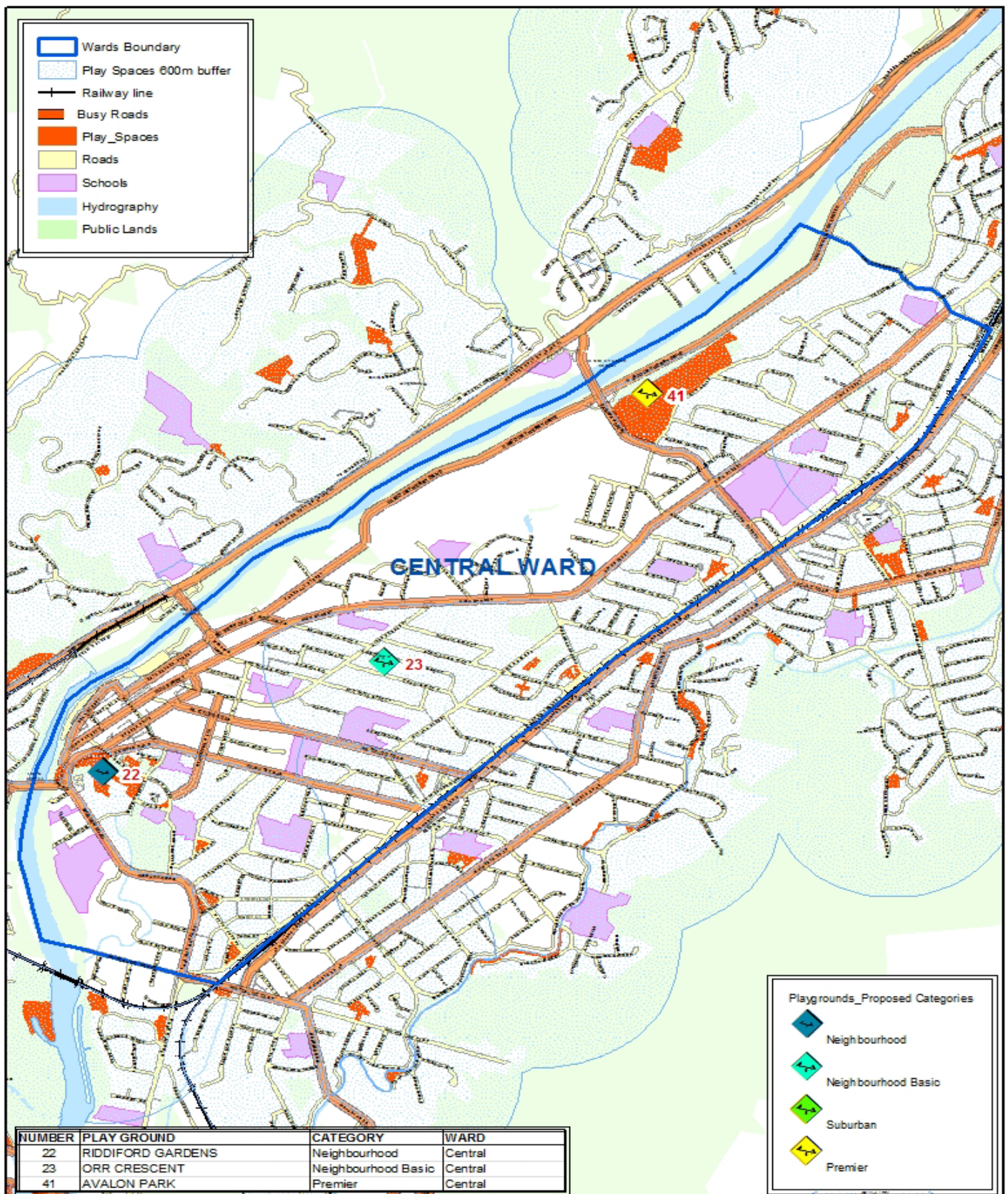
Council supported Briony's idea. Briony and others will be working with a number of Council officers to refine and this idea, prepare a proposal and report back to Council in 2012.

## Breakdown of current playgrounds by Ward and Category

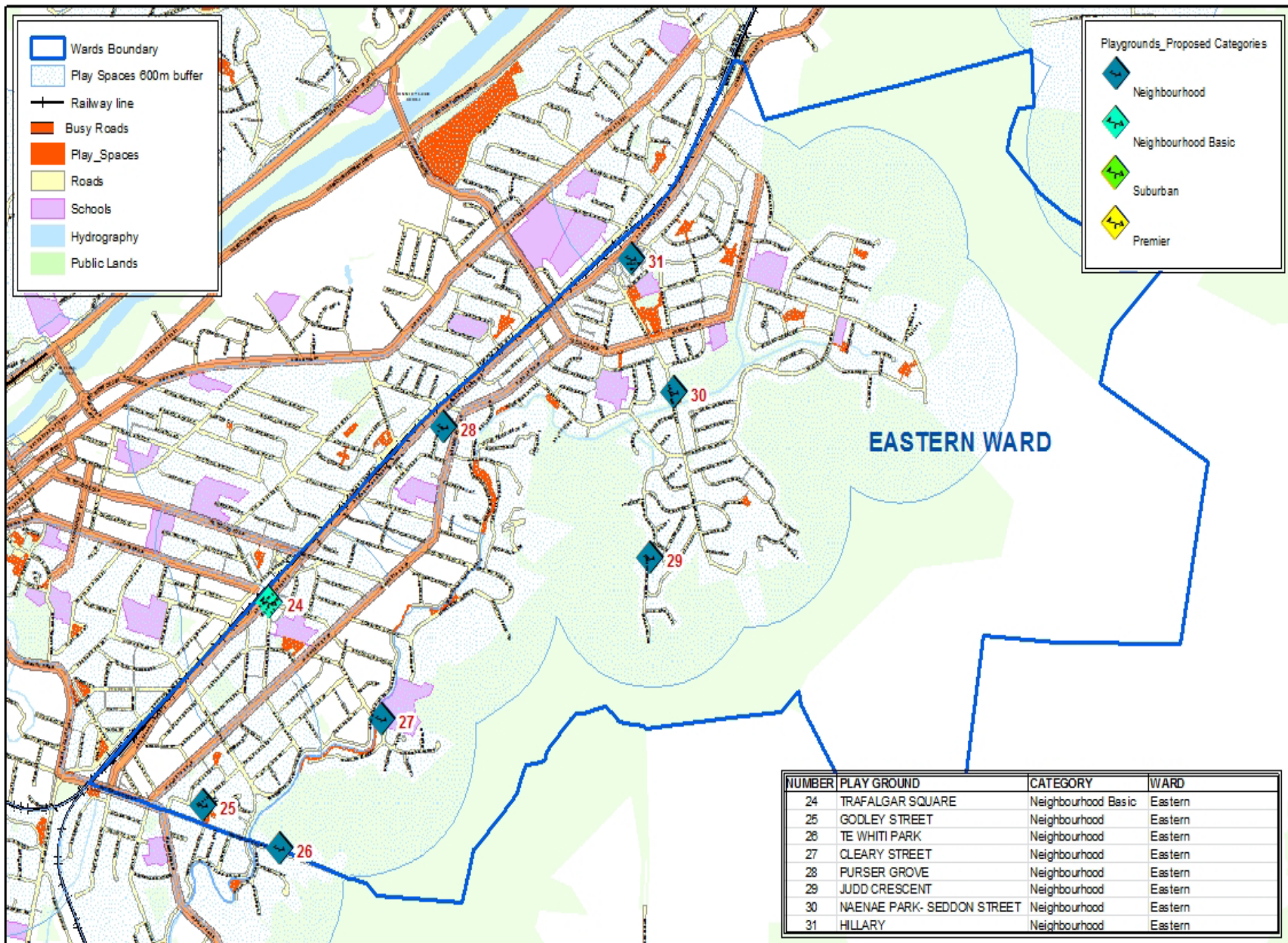
Ward		Current Playgrounds	
<b>Central Ward</b>		neighbourhood basic	1
		neighbourhood	1
		premier	1
		Avalon Park Skate Facility and Cycleway	
<b>Eastern Ward</b>		neighbourhood basic	1
		neighbourhood	7
		Walter Mildenhall Park teen court	
<b>Harbour Ward</b>	Petone	neighbourhood basic	2
		neighbourhood	4
		suburban	3
		Petone Recreation Ground Skate Ramp	
	Eastbourne	neighbourhood basic	1
		neighbourhood	1
suburban		1	
<b>Northern Ward</b>	Stokes Valley	neighbourhood	5
		suburban	1
		Speldhurst Park Skate Ramp	
	Taita	neighbourhood basic	1
		neighbourhood	1
		suburban	1
<b>Wainuiomata Ward</b>		neighbourhood basic	1
		neighbourhood	5
		suburban	3
		Hugh Sinclair Park Skate Facility Waiu Street Mountain Bike Facility	
<b>Western Ward</b>		neighbourhood	11
		suburban	2
		Rowan Street Reserve hard court Jubilee Park Skate Ramp Victoria Street Reserve Skate Ramp Melling Skate Ramp	
<b>Total</b>			<b>54</b>

## Summary of proposed categories

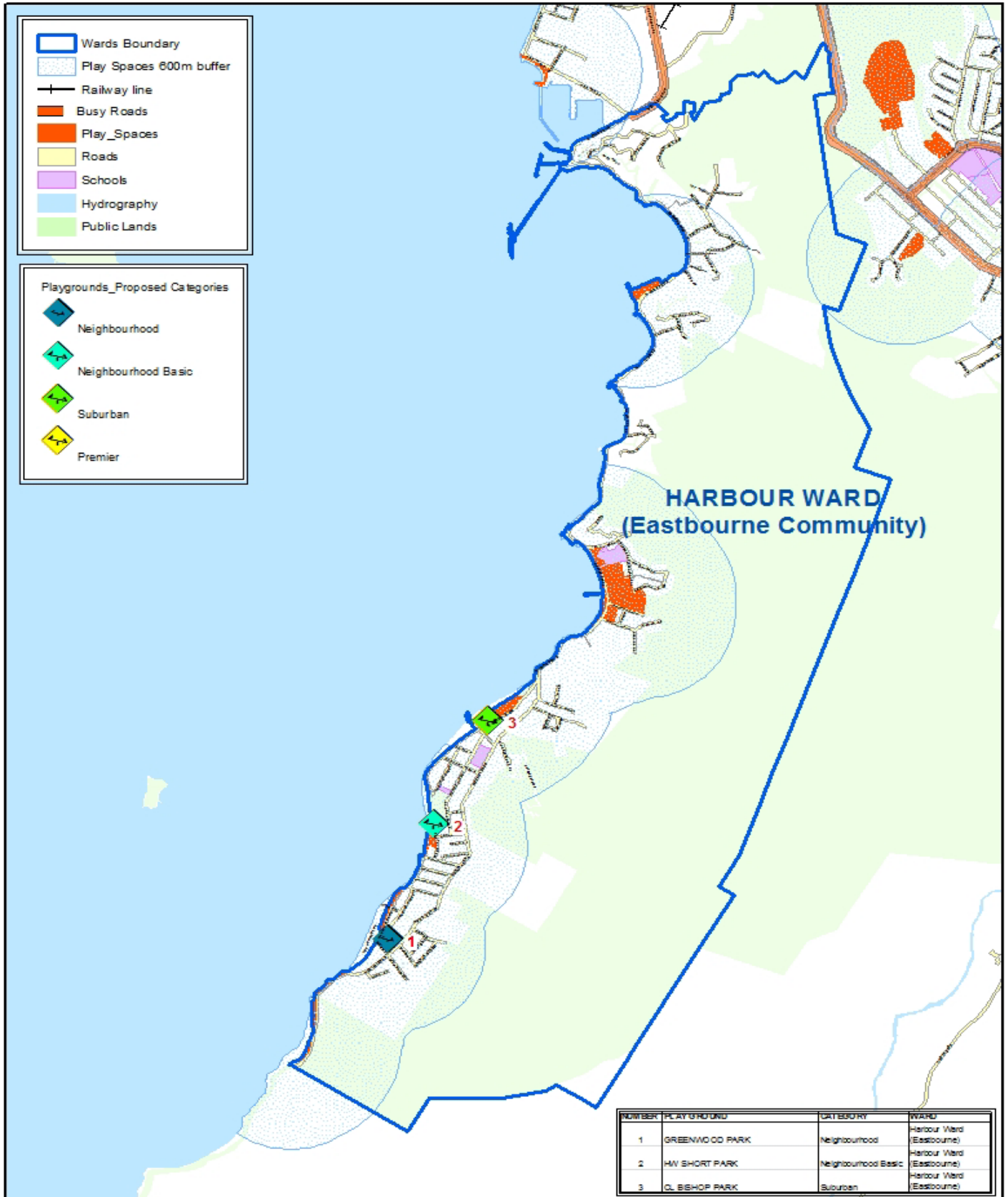
Ward		Current Playgrounds	Proposed Playgrounds
Central Ward		3	4 new PG in Central Ward
Eastern Ward		8	8
Harbour Ward	Petone	9	9
	Eastbourne	3	3
Northern Ward	Stokes Valley	6	5 remove PG at Stokes Valley Rd
	Taita	3	2 remove PGs at Farmer Cres
Wainuiomata Ward		9	9
Western Ward		13	15 new PGs at Arahiwi Grove and Meadowbank
<b>Total</b>		<b>54</b>	<b>55</b>



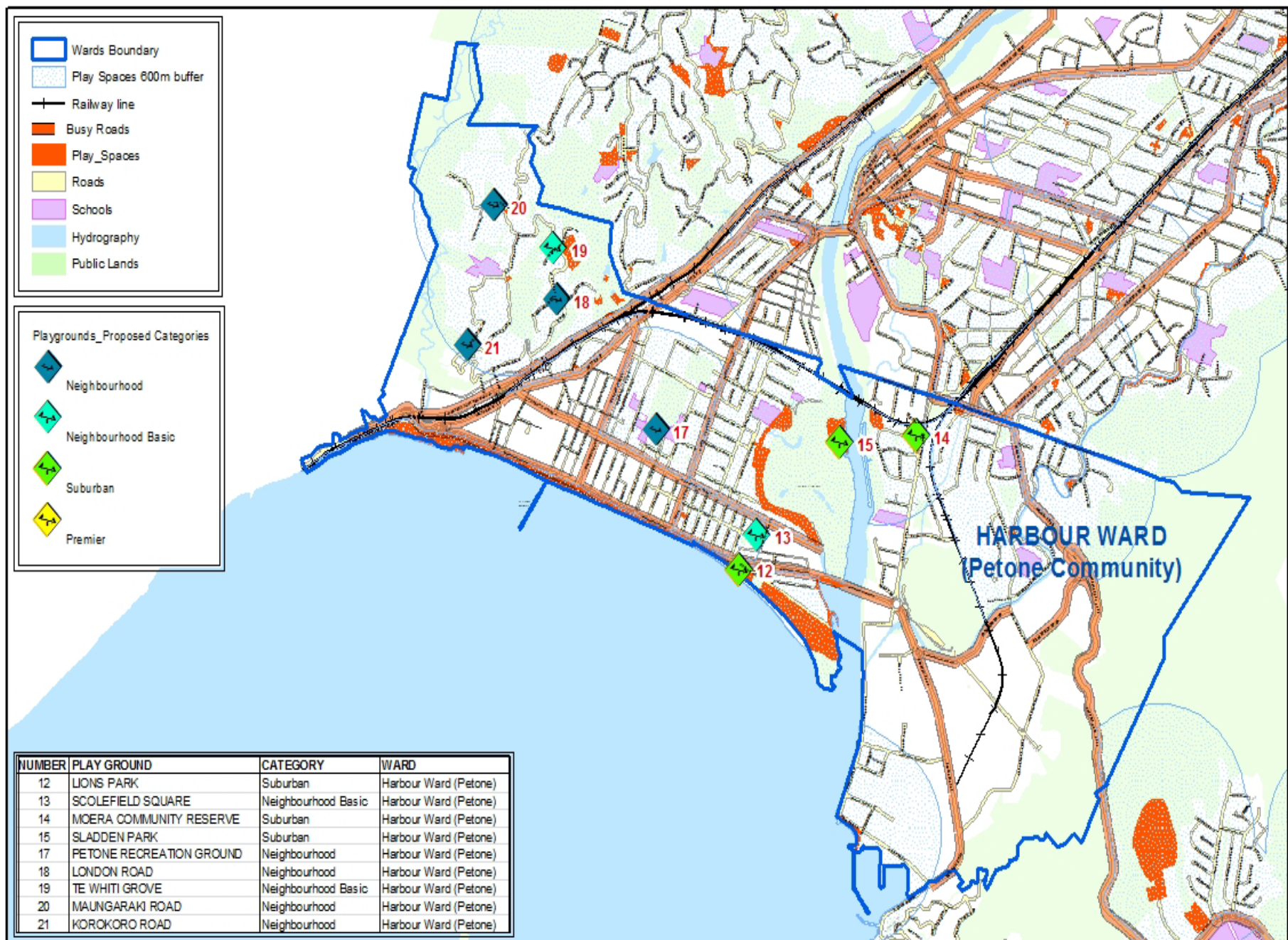
### Hutt City Council Managed Playgrounds - Central Ward



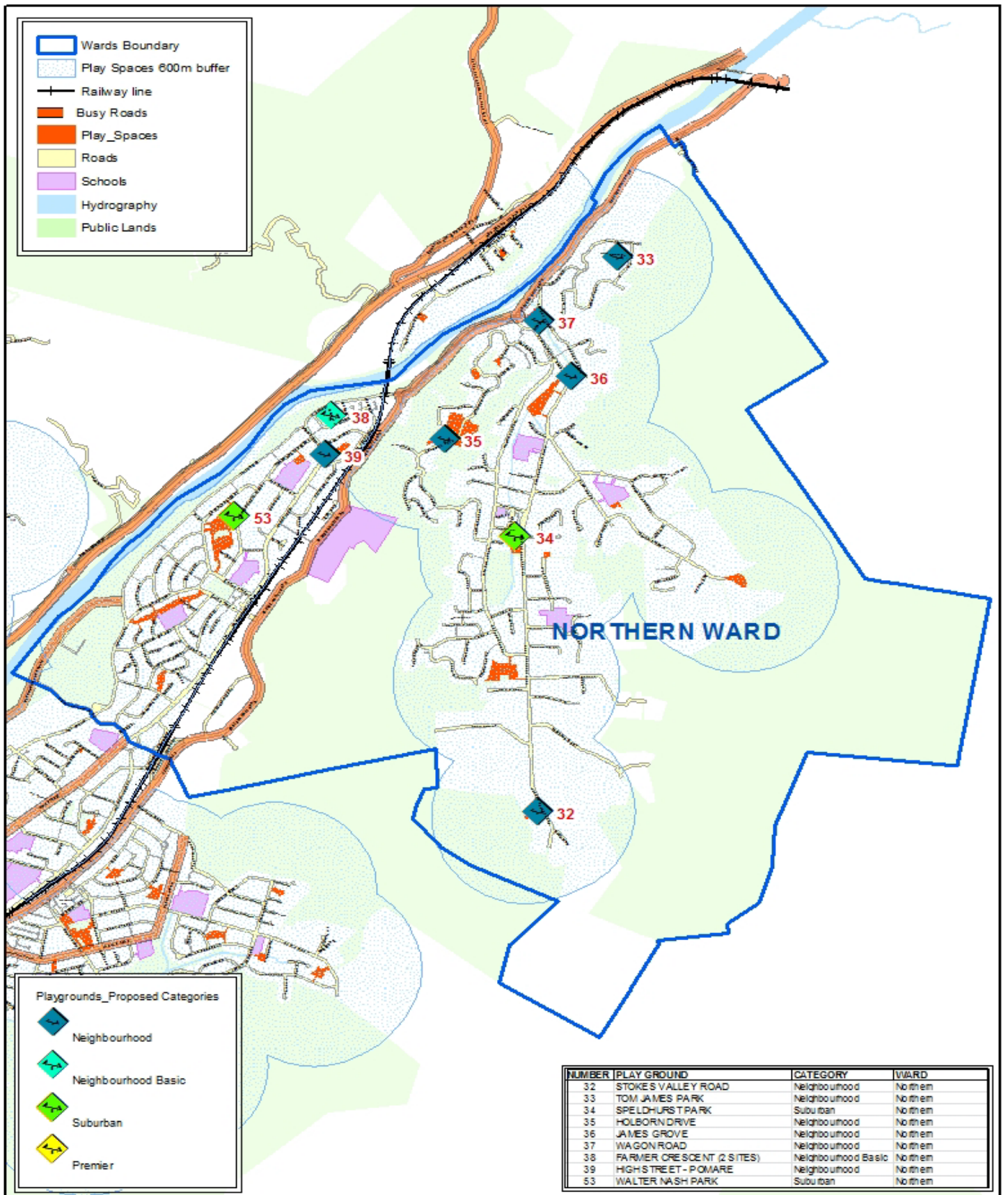
**Hutt City Council Managed Playgrounds - Eastern Ward**



### Hutt City Council Managed Playgrounds - Harbour Ward (Eastbourne)

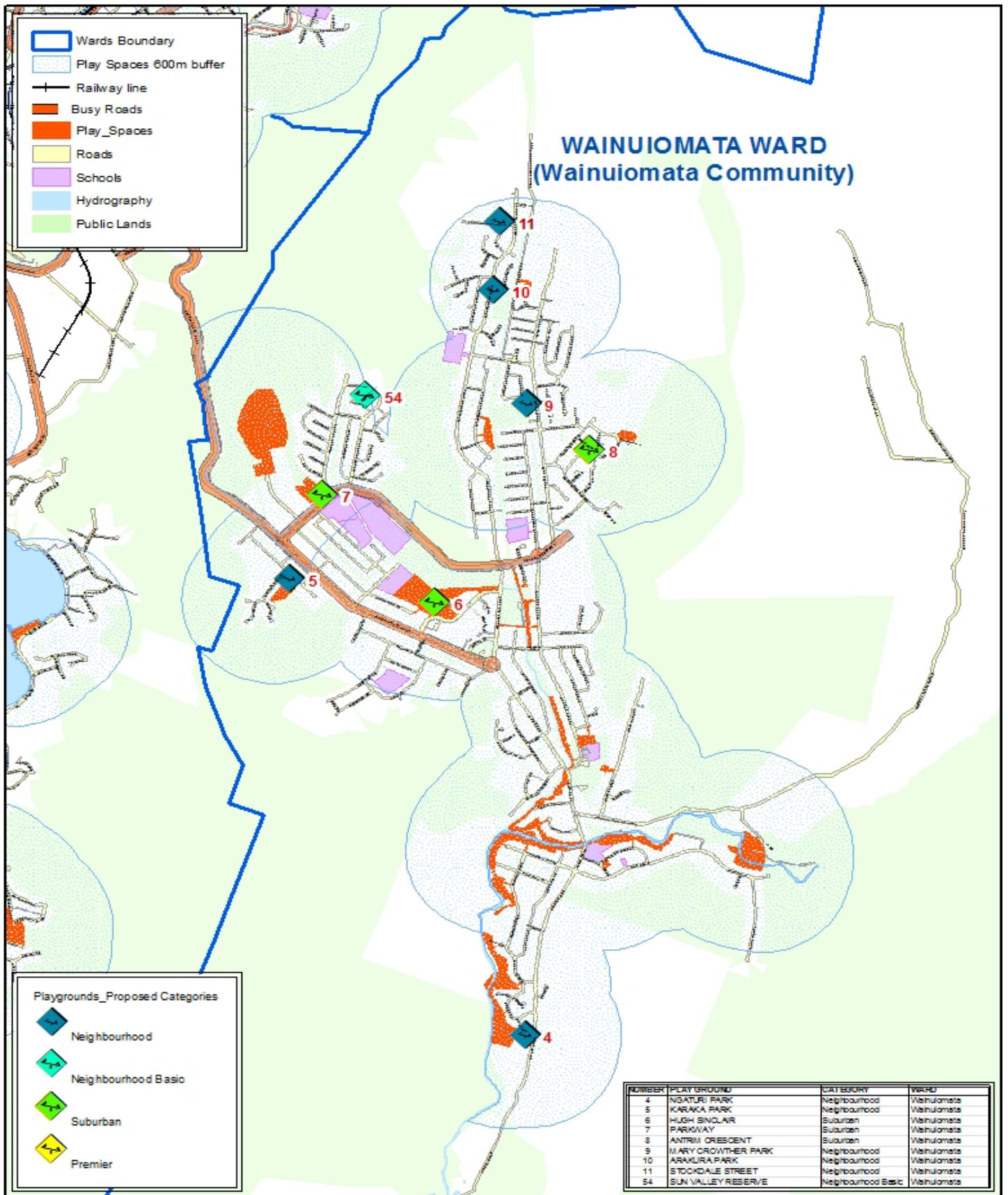


**Hutt City Council Managed Playgrounds - Harbour Ward (Petone)**

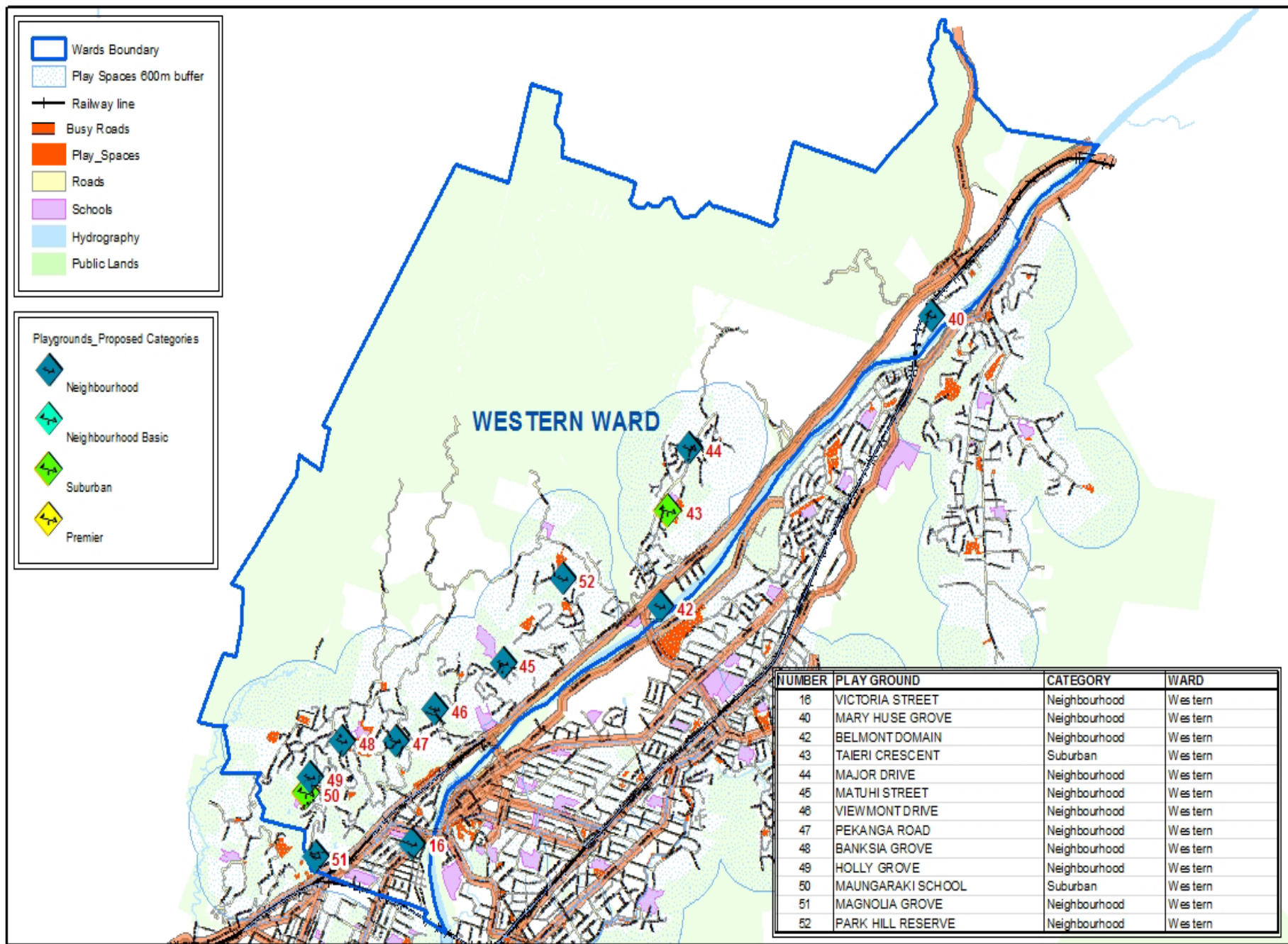


### Hutt City Council Managed Playgrounds - Northern Ward





### Hutt City Council Managed Playgrounds - Wainuiomata Ward



**Hutt City Council Managed Playgrounds - Western Ward**

## Proposed Works

Playground	Ward/Board	Play value	Condition	Site	Solution
Antrim Crescent	Wainuiomata	3	2	Under developed but interesting terrain	At end of life, replace playground with attractively designed low maintenance equipment (aluminium and steel)
Arahiwi Grove	Western			Underdeveloped, fair distance from existing playgrounds	Install new Neighbourhood Basic PG
Avalon Park	Central	5	2	Lacks coordinated, professional, overall design for whole park but vast area and well located	use 2004 development plan and a starting point
Arakura Park	Wainuiomata	3	2	Sportsround frontage	
Banksia Grove	Western	3	4	Underdeveloped but fantastic views	
Belmont Domain	Western	3	4	Attractive site with loads of recreation opportunities	
Central Ward Playground	Central			Not yet determined but should consider Epuni Community Reserve	Install new Neighbourhood PG
Civic/Riddiford Gardens	Central	4	4	Attractive site, redeveloped likely as part of Making Places	
CL Bishop Park	Eastbourne	4	2	Seaside location with loads of recreation opportunities	senior playground being replaced 2011/12
Cleary Street	Eastern	4	3	Site not owned by Council	
Farmer Crescent – The Links	Northern	2	2	2 small road reserve areas likely to be lost with HNZ redevelopment – remove HCC PGs in 2012	Work with HNZ
Godley Street	Eastern	4	3	Underdeveloped site with housing that overlooks site. Good open areas for kicking a ball.	
Greenwood Park	Eastbourne	3	2	Exposed site. Acts as a short cut and could kick a ball around. Lacks vegetation	
Hillary Court	Northern	4		Active outdoor pedestrian mall	
Holborn Drive	Northern	3	4	Exposed site with large turf area. Poorly drained.	
Holly Grove	Western	4	4	Well located, fenced and sheltered	As upgrading occurs focus on under 5s

Playground	Ward/Board	Play value	Condition	Site	Solution
Hugh Sinclair Park	Wainuiomata	5	4	Vast well planted site with loads of recreation opportunities, drainage is an issue at this site. Functions as a through route for walkers and cyclists.	Requires toilet
HW Shortt Park	Eastbourne	1	3	Seaside sportsground	
James Grove	Northern	3	4	Tight site with little recreation opportunity beyond playground, Site owned by GWRC	Review the local provision for play at James Grove, Wagon Road and Tui Glen School
Jubilee Park Skate Ramp	Western	1	1	Ramp is past the used by date and Melling Skate Park is accessible to Young People.	Remove Skate Ramp in 2012. Replace with teen/community facility eg hard court
Judd Crescent	Eastern	4	2	Good size site underdeveloped and underplanted. Interesting terrain. Vandalism is an issue.	
Karaka Park	Wainuiomata	3	3	Good size site managed as a sportsground. underdeveloped and underplanted.	
Korokoro Road	Petone	3	2	Very tight site that only (just) hosts the playground) and 2 seats Road Reserve	
Lions Park	Petone	5	5	Attractive, well connected, well serviced seaside setting with loads of recreation opportunities	
London Road	Petone	4	3	Road Reserve	
Magnolia Grove	Western	1.5	3	Underdeveloped site	Focus on under 5s and consider fencing boundary.
Mary Crowther Park	Wainuiomata	3	3	Big site managed as a sportsground. Underdeveloped and underplanted.	
Mary Huse Grove	Western	4	5	Site dominated by playground but remaining area poorly drained	
Matuhi Street	Western	4	3	Attractive site, well connected next to bush setting	
Maungaraki Road	Western	4	5	Very tight site that only (just) hosts the playground) Road Reserve	

Playground	Ward/Board	Play value	Condition	Site	Solution
Maungaraki School	Western	3	2	Large council owned reserve but it functions as school grounds	Manage all playground assets at the site as one. Consider relocating Holy Grove playground and end of life to combine all on one site
Meadowbank Reserve	Western			Underdeveloped site	Install Neighbourhood Basic PG
Melling Skate Facility				Likely to be required for SH2 and Melling Bridge works but timing uncertain	Relocate in CBD prior to works
Ngaturi Park	Wainuiomata	4	3	Previously managed as sportsground, on edge of suburban area	Relocating more centrally to Wood Street Reserve
Parkway Family Playground	Wainuiomata	4	3	Attractive site next to bush setting. Grounds are underdeveloped and playground equipment is spread across the site. Flying Fox is a special attraction.	Cluster play equipment to enhance open areas of the site for other recreation.
Park Hill Reserve	Western	3	4	Large, attractive site with interesting terrain, bush track creek and open lawns. Connects to Park Road and Hill Road.	Improve environmental fit of play equipment. Add hard court.
Pekanga Road	Western	3	3	Fenced site. Road reserve. Playground is the only feature	
Petone Recreation Ground	Petone	4	4	Large, attractive site managed as a sportsground. Well connected to the suburb and offers respite from the surrounding area. Used by the community for casual recreation outside of booked events, games and trainings.	
Pomare Playground, High Street	Northern	4	3	Reserve underdeveloped at rear and underplanted	Improve environmental fit of play equipment. Add specimen trees and path. Consider relocating further back when replacement due.
Moera Community Centre	Central	4	2	Cluttered with play equipment but a great location and good shade	Remove or cluster equipment around mound to enhance open areas of the site for other recreation.
Orr Crescent	Central	2	4	Unusual shape. Little opportunity for recreation beyond playground. Functions as a through route.	Remove at end of life. Consider selling site and using funds to offset cost of acquiring a more suitable site nearby.

Playground	Ward/Board	Play value	Condition	Site	Solution
Purser Grove	Eastern	3	2	Well located away from busy roads. Good size site but underdeveloped and underplanted.	
Naenae Park, Seddon Street	Eastern	4	2	Large, attractive site managed as a sportsground. Well connected to the suburb. Playground subject to high level of vandalism and graffiti	At end of life, replace with attractively designed playground low maintenance equipment (aluminium and steel)
Scholefield Street	Petone	1	5	Open, central site, provides for a range of recreation, particularly touch and volleyball. Functions as a community gathering point.	Add specimen trees. Do not expand range of play equipment.
Sladden Park	Petone	4	2	Large, attractive riverside site managed as a sportsground. Offers respite from the suburban area.	At end of life, consider whether the play values of the fort can be replicated. Improve appeal to general caregivers and walkers
Speldhurst Park	Northern	5	4	Attractive, mature setting. Site functions as a community gathering point which appeals to a range of ages.	Reconsider value of rage cage at end of its life.
Stockdale Street	Wainuiomata	3	3	Small site. Under planted. Exposed looking.	Add specimen trees.
Stokes Valley Road	Northern	1	3	Street frontage to extensive reserve network.	Remove playground at end of useful life. Provide well grade track between Stokes Valley Road and ridge.
Sun Valley	Wainuiomata	1	5	Unusual shape. Functions as a through route.	Review requirement for the swing at end of life.
Taieri Street	Western	5	4	Interesting site has a secluded feel.	Improve entrance and the connection through to the Kelson Sportsground. Continue to work with Kelson School. Continue fitting the equipment around the "natural" environment and terrain.
Te Whiti Grove	Petone	1	2	Street entry to extensive reserve network. Shady site. Below the street.	Renew at end of useful life.
Tom James Park	Northern	2	3	Artificial looking site that is exposed.	Retain and improve remaining reserve for active recreation.

Playground	Ward/Board	Play value	Condition	Site	Solution
Victoria Street Playground	Western	4	3	Mature site, located next the Hutt Central School.	Council and the school need to provide playgrounds. Remove Skate Ramp in 2012
Viewmont Drive	Western	3	3	Pokey site that is reasonably popular and could be enhanced with landscaping. Could extend track network to connect to it.	At end of life consider replacing at Arahiwi Grove which is much larger.
Wagon Road	Northern	4	3	Spacious, high profile site at the entrance to Stokes Valley.	Upgrade the site with landscaping to allow this site to contribute as an entrance to Stokes Valley. Review the purpose of James Grove and Wagon Road playgrounds.
Walter Nash Park	Northern	4	5	Well connected site with scope for further development.	Expand the landscaping upgrade across the whole site. Encourage service providers to programme activities at this site.
Trafalgar Square	Eastern	3	2	Very small but central site. Plunket was located next door.	Only provide for under 5s. Work with Waterloo School to provide for 5 to 12 year olds.
Wood Street Reserve	Wainuiomata			Open site with reasonable visibility from street and neighbours	At end of useful life, relocate Ngaturi Park PG to Wood Street Reserve

Play Value: 5 = high play value      1 = little play value

Condition: 5 = excellent condition      1 = poor condition but safety issues addressed by removing or isolating  
This rating system complies with the PRAMS Asset Condition Rating Manual developed by NZRA 1998

## Prioritising Play Spaces and Playgrounds

Key Principle 4, Priority for Provision, states that “Overall, communities of lower socio-economic demographics will be prioritised for play space development/upgrades and this *may* include play equipment”. Anticipating the demand for open spaces and play spaces in areas where intensification is likely to be greatest is also important.

Council is guided by the Deprivation Index, which is analysed by Area Unit by Statistics New Zealand. Area Units are geographic areas determined for census purposes.

In accordance with this statement, the most important areas for Council to concentrate on play opportunities, play spaces and playgrounds are:

Area Unit	Justification	Priority
Avalon East	Deprived community Poor access to existing sites locally (dissected by roading)	Low – upgrade Colson Street Reserve to improve appeal, may be possible to work with Avalon Intermediate School as interim measure
Alicetown	Poor access to existing sites locally (dissected by roading)	Low - Hutt River banks provide local opportunities
Delaney	Deprived community	Medium – upgrade of Kamahi Park may be part of the solution. Note that Delaney Park and Speldhurst Park are fairly close
Boulcott	Poor access to existing sites locally	Medium – may be possible to solve simply by working with Boulcott School
Esplanade	Poor access to existing sites locally (dissected by roading)	Low – can access beach and Petone Recreation Ground with crossings, will require land acquisition to address
Glendale	Deprived community	High – improve Antrim Crescent Reserve overall to encourage more frequent use. Part of the solution may be to (re)locate a popular community recreation function here and this may involve a building. The existing Tipperary Grove boxing hall will be demolished in 2012.
Homedale East	Deprived community	High – upgrade reserve north of pool and work with neighbours on ex-school site
Homedale West	Deprived community	Medium – upgrade Rotary Park enhance Ngaturi Park Playground or relocate more centrally (possibly to Wood Street Reserve)



<b>Area Unit</b>	<b>Justification</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Hutt Central	Residential development anticipated Furtherers Making places objectives and could address Young People's issue of places to hang out/things to do. Could also provide for adult recreation activity in CBD Melling Skate Facility likely to go in medium term as part of SH2/Melling Bridge works	Medium – well located land will need to be secured for new public open space
Kelson	Part of Kelson Sportsground likely to be developed for housing purposes	Medium – upgrade and drain remaining area of Kelson Sportsground to improve appeal and year round function
Maungaraki	Part of Oakleigh Street Reserve likely to be developed for housing purposes	Medium – upgrade and drain remaining area of Oakleigh Street Reserve to improve appeal and year round function
Moera	Deprived community and poor access to existing sites locally	High – solution may involve upgrading York Park and working with Moera School
Naenae North	Deprived community	Medium – design and upgrade Walter Mildenhall Park with a recreation focus. Teen court being installed on Tredwell Street in 2012. Consider value of upgrading Rata Street Reserve, Glenbrook Grove Reserve, Butler Grove Reserve and Prebble Grove Reserve and possibly adding new playground to one of these sites
Naenae South	Deprived community	Low – upgrade Butler Grove Reserve and Waddington Reserve
Normandale	Skate ramp being removed in 2012. Difficult to access range of sites locally	Medium – solution may involve new, well located hard court and working with Normandale School
Petone Central	Residential development anticipated	Low – as developments are planned, work with developers to provide new, well located public open space
Taita North	Deprived community	Medium – continue upgrading Walter Nash Park using existing theme
Taita South	Deprived community	Medium – implement Sportsville concept at Fraser Park and Walter Nash Stadium. Consider whether a 0 to 5 playground should be added.
Waterloo East	Poor access to existing sites locally	Low – solution may involve working with Waterloo School, alternatively will require land acquisition
Woburn South	Poor access to existing sites locally	Low – very low number of children in this area

## Funding Play Spaces and Playgrounds

New playgrounds and significant upgrades are capital budget items in Council's Community Plan. The operational budget for playgrounds is used for inspections, maintenance and minor upgrades/replacement of play equipment and safety surfacing.

### Current Operational Funding

Cost of Contract	\$29,000
Playground Other Maintenance	\$43,500

### Capital Funding allocated in 2011/12 for period ending 2018/19

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Playground Maintenance (equipment & surfacing)	120,000	123,000	126,000	130,000	133,000	148,000	152,000	156,000
Avalon Park Development		105,000			111,000		117,000	
Avalon Park Improvements	150,000		105,000		111,000		117,000	
Holborn Drive Reserve drainage					166,000			
Kelson Sportsground Development		205,000						
Oakleigh Street Reserve Development		205,000						
Percy Scenic Reserve Development			211,000					
Petone Foreshore Improvements					333,000	342,000		
Poto Road Reserve Development		103,000						
Walter Mildenhall Park Development	300,000							

## Simple Summary of Expenditure

Based on recent prices for similar projects:

Category	Current Playgrounds	Lifespan (years)	Approximate cost per playground	Annual Expenditure for renewals
neighbourhood basic	9 <sup>1</sup>	15	\$10000	\$6,000
neighbourhood	33	15	\$45,000	\$99,000
suburban	11	15	\$125,000	\$91,666
premier	1	15	\$750,000	to be funded as separate project
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>			<b>197,000</b>

The current expenditure of \$120,000 on playground renewals is not sufficient to maintain the existing equipment in the current condition. The overall condition and appeal of Council's playgrounds is deteriorating and deferred maintenance is accumulating.

In order to maintain the current asset at the current condition approximately \$195,000<sup>2</sup> is required for renewals annually, with the exception of 2022/23 when approximately \$310,000 will be required.

Deferred maintenance is estimated to be \$70,000 and is mostly made up of swing renovations, matting repairs/replacement and painting. The value of deferred maintenance tasks that are not required as a response to safety issues is rising.

The Action Plan contained in this document addresses the renewal and deferred maintenance funding.

The expected useful life for individual pieces of playground equipment, safety matting and bark varies substantially. Council has chosen to adopt an overall useful life of 15 years for playgrounds for asset management purposes. This is an important factor in calculating renewal figures for asset management.

Upper Hutt and Wellington City Council also expect the overall lifespan of their playgrounds to be approximately 15 years.

<sup>1</sup> includes Stokes Valley Road Playground but note this will be removed in approximately 2017/18

<sup>2</sup> Some playgrounds eg Walter Nash, are expected to require renewals that do not equate to the standard prices used in the Simple Summary of Expenditure. Detail about the timing and costs are set out in the Action Plan contained in Go Outside and Play

## Action Plan

	Task	Year	Amount
<b>Deferred Maintenance</b>	maintenance	2012/13	70,000
<b>Renewals</b>			
Antrim Crescent	renew	2013/14	125000
Arakura Park	renew	2015/16	45000
Banksia Grove	renew	2021/22	45000
Belmont Domain	renew	2018/19	45000
Civic Riddiford Gardens	renew	2021/22	45000
CL Bishop Park senior	renew	2012/13	75000
CL Bishop Park junior	renew	2019/20	20000
CL Bishop Park senior	renew	2026/17	105000
Cleary Street	renew	2018/19	45000
Farmer Crescent (2 small sites)	remove	2012/13	
Godley Street Reserve	renew	2017/18	45000
Greenwood Park	renew	2014/15	45000
Hillary Court	renew	2022/23	45000
Holborn Drive	renew	2019/20	45000
Holly Grove	renew	2020/21	45000
Hugh Sinclair Park	renew	2022/23	125000
HW Shortt Park	renew	2012/13	10000
James Grove Reserve	renew	2021/22	45000
Judd Crescent Reserve	renew	2016/17	45000
Karaka Park	renew	2016/17	45000
Korokoro Road	renew	2018/19	10000
Lions Park	renew	2025/26	125000
London Road	renew	2019/20	45000
Magnolia Grove	renew	2013/14	45000
Major Drive	renew	2020/21	45000
Mary Crowther Park	renew	2024/25	45000
Mary Huse Grove	renew	2024/25	45000
Matuhi Street	renew	2019/20	45000
Maungaraki Road	renew	2025/26	45000
Maungaraki School	renew	2014/15	125000
Moera Community Reserve junior	renew	2013/14	40000
Moera Community Reserve senior	renew	2016/17	85000
Naenae Park, Seddon Street	renew	2018/19	45000
Ngaturi Park - Wood Street Reserve	renew & relocate	2016/17	45000
Orr Crescent	renew	2017/18	10000
Park Hill Reserve	renew	2023/24	45000
Parkway Family Playground	renew	2015/16	125000
Pekanga Road	renew	2018/19	45000
Petone Recreation Ground junior	renew	2020/21	15000
Petone Recreation Ground senior	renew	2021/22	30000
Pomare, High Street	renew	2015/16	20000
Pomare, High Street	renew	2014/16	25000
Purser Grove	renew	2013/14	45000
Scholefield Street	renew	2023/24	10000
Sladden Park	renew	2017/18	125000

	<b>Task</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Speldhurst Park	renew	2022/23	125000
Stockdale Street	renew	2020/21	45000
Stokes Valley Road	remove	2017/18	
Sun Valley Way	renew	2024/25	10000
Taieri Crescent	renew	2023/24	125000
Te Whiti Grove	renew	2015/16	10000
Te Whiti Park	renew	2019/20	45000
Tom James Park stage 1	renew	2021/22	30000
Tom James Park stage 2	renew	2022/23	15000
Trafalgar Square	renew	2017/18	10000
Victoria Street Reserve	renew	2020/21	45000
Viewmont Drive	renew	2026/27	45000
Wagon Road	renew	2016/17	45000
Walter Nash Park	renew	2026/27	65000
			2945000
			<b>196333.3</b>
<b>Annual renewal requirement based on 15 yr cycle</b>			

	<b>Task</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Large/unusual renewal projects to be funded individually through Annual Plan process</b>			
Avalon Park cycle road	maintenance	2018/19	9000
Avalon Park playground	maintenance	2 yearly	102000
Avalon Park skate facility	maintenance		
Hugh Sinclair Park skate facility	maintenance		
Petone Recreation Ground skate ramp	maintenance		
Rowan Street Reserve hardcourt	maintenance		
Victoria Street Reserve skate ramp	remove	2012/13	
Walter Mildenhall Park teen court	maintenance		
<b>Capital New</b>			
Arahiwi Grove	new facility	2013/14	10000
Central Ward playground (additional)	new facility	2014/15	45000
Jubilee Park community outdoor space	replacement facility	2012/13	80000
Jubilee Park ramp	remove	2012/13	
Kelson Sportsground improvements	improvements	2015/16	161000
Meadowbank Reserve	new facility	2015/16	10000
Melling Skate Facility relocation	relocate	uncertain	
Oakleigh Street Reserve	improvements	2013/14	102000
Hardcourt Western Hills	new facility	2022/23	63000
Holborn Drive	drainage	2015/16	161000
<b>School Negotiations (possible outcome)</b>			
Boulcott School		2013/14	23000
Hutt Central School		2012/13	
Kelson School		2012/13	
Maungaraki School landscaping	one-off	2016/17	23000
Maranatha School		2022/23	23000
Normandale School		2020/21	23000
Petone Central School		2014/15	23000
Pomare School		2019/20	23000
Tui Glen School		2017/18	23000
Wainuimata Primary School		2015/16	23000
Waterloo School		2021/22	23000

## Operational Issues

### Inspections and Maintenance

A contractor carries out fortnightly inspections of Council's playgrounds. Any minor maintenance is attended to during the visit. The Reserves Asset Manager and the contractor discuss and schedule any additional maintenance that is required.

### Deferred Maintenance

While preparing the Action Plan, officers and the contractor quantified the deferred maintenance for playgrounds site by site. As at April 2012, deferred maintenance for playgrounds was estimated to be \$70,000.

Deferred maintenance is gradually accumulating and the effect of this is deteriorating playground equipment and declining play value and overall appeal. Deferred maintenance items include:

- Replace out dated shackle systems with modern, bearing hanger system
- renovating or replacing sections of safety matting
- solutions for containing bark on sites
- painting
- replacing and rearranging individual items of equipment

Safety matters (present and potential) do not feature in the list of deferred maintenance items.

### Requests for Service at playgrounds

Requests for service (RFS) related to playgrounds are recorded in Council's Confirm asset management system. These requests comprise a mix of policy and operational issues and most could be categorised as complaints or reports of problems. The annual number of playground requests consistently makes up less than 5% of the total number of RFSs related to Parks and Gardens (P & G).

Financial Year	No.PG RFSs	PG RFSs as percentage of total P & G RFSs	Total P & G RFSs
2007/08	67	4.7%	1428
2008/09	66	4.3%	1530
2009/10	70	4.5%	1562
2010/11	66	4.7%	1400

## Community Participation

Council's preference is to work with community groups when larger scale developments are being considered for public open spaces. As Regional Public Health have stated in Healthy Open Spaces, Council believes that "poorly designed and maintained open spaces, lack of investment in green spaces, and limited community involvement in their development can have a detrimental effect on the community". At the very least Council misses the opportunity to gain buy in to projects. There is also a risk that the development will be less relevant to the community.

Section 10 of the Local Government Act 2002 states that one of the purposes of local government is to "enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of communities".

It is beneficial to involve the community in some aspects of playground planning and decision making. Key Principle 13 requires Council to involve communities in some aspects of play spaces planning, design and decision making. This doesn't mean that consultation will be carried out to determine whether a slide or a springy animal will be added to or removed from a site. Communities will be involved in higher level design issues, for example the target age group for play equipment, tree planting versus shade sails, priorities for expenditure.

## Vandalism

Unfortunately Playgrounds suffer from vandalism. Annually playground vandalism and graffiti costs Council approximately \$25,000. The cost of this damage is one issue but an equally important one is that vandalism gives a place a negative vibe and makes it less appealing and is likely to reduce users. Graffiti is the most common form of vandalism. The playground contractor reports that the number of responses to graffiti on playgrounds has increased markedly over the last decade. The contractor, who has carried out similar work on playgrounds for Upper Hutt and Wellington City Councils, believes that the vandalism occurs more frequently at Hutt City playgrounds.

Vandalism makes a place look rough. If a place looks rough caregivers are more reluctant to allow and encourage children and young people to visit. Places that are poorly used are more easily vandalised. It is a bit of a vicious cycle.

In general, popular sites (sites that are used by many people) and those that are seen by many people, experience far less vandalism. There's a lot to be said for keeping a site full of kids.

Overall, the most vandalised play spaces and playgrounds are:

- Antrim Crescent
- Naenae Park
- Ngaturi Park
- Melling Skate Park
- Judd Crescent



Clearly vandalism, theft and graffiti are problematic. Broken glass amongst play equipment and bark is also an issue at some parks. Attending to these problems costs Council and often affects the availability because the playground contractor needs to order parts in.

## **Supervision**

Council is keen to see children, young people and their families having fun in play spaces for which Council is responsible. We believe that many of these play spaces could provide good opportunities for children and young people to play without direct supervision.

Clearly some sites are unsuitable for some ages and abilities. Further to this, access to some sites can be difficult or even dangerous because of busy roads or water and it would be irresponsible to encourage children and young people into these sites without supervision.

The Summary Offences Act 1981 Section 10B, Leaving a child without reasonable supervision and care, states that "Every person is liable to a fine not exceeding \$2,000 who, being a parent or guardian or a person for the time being having the care of a child under the age of 14 years, leaves that child, without making reasonable provision for the supervision and care of the child, for a time that is unreasonable or under conditions that are unreasonable having regard to all the circumstances.

Council's position is that parents and caregivers have responsibility for ensuring reasonable supervision. The particular child (or children), site and access to the site are key considerations.

It is impractical and probably undesirable for Council to supervise playgrounds and play spaces.

One of the most effective ways of providing supervision at playgrounds and play spaces is to make the sites appealing to adults, especially parents and caregivers. This involves attractive landscaping, shelter, seating and paths. It is desirable for most playgrounds and play spaces to be popular and busy sites because this is likely to reduce undesirable behaviour.

For premier and suburban playgrounds and play spaces it is desirable additional service such as good toilets (with a baby changing facility), concessionaires for coffee and convenient car parking.

## **Recent Migrants**

A study of recent migrant's experience of nature-based recreation identified that there are several barriers that affected participation in outdoor recreation in

New Zealand<sup>3</sup>. Participating in outdoor recreation may assist migrants to integrate with the wider community.

The following items are likely to enhance migrants' experiences of Hutt City play spaces:

- Areas where several families can gather
- Providing food facilities (for purchasing, preparing and eating food)
- Providing shelter and shade and seating
- Frequent rubbish bin servicing
- Delivering useful information about play spaces

Identifying opportunities to increase the number and range of play spaces users is beneficial and considering the requirements of new migrants is worthwhile. Their needs do not appear to be very different from those of the wider community.

## **Facilities in Play Spaces**

Providing amenities in play spaces is likely to improve use so long as they are well chosen, well laid out and well maintained. Common features in play spaces include:

Toilets and changing rooms  
Seating and tables  
Hard courts  
Play grounds  
Paths and tracks  
Bike tracks  
Decks  
Car parks  
Shade  
Turf  
Signage  
Large specimen trees and vegetation

Some sites contain specialised recreation amenities and services, for example mini golf, model trains, bike hire and kayak hire. Concessionaires provide some of these services and their operation is often requires Council to issue a licence. Council officers consider how the proposed activity will fit with reserve management plans and the requirements of the Reserves Act 1977. In addition, the service may require a resource consent.

## **Food in Play Spaces**

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<sup>3</sup> Lovelock, B. et al, (2010). Recent immigrants' recreation experiences of outdoor nature-based settings in New Zealand source from: [http://www.sparc.org.nz/Documents/Research/awarded-grants/Lovelock%20\(2010\)%20Recent%20migrants'%20recreation%20experiences.pdf](http://www.sparc.org.nz/Documents/Research/awarded-grants/Lovelock%20(2010)%20Recent%20migrants'%20recreation%20experiences.pdf) on 15 September 2010

It is likely that eating and preparing hot food in play spaces will increase as our community becomes more diverse. The Chinese community is growing in Hutt City and research indicates that this community associates recreation with hot food in outdoor settings. The Chinese community will not be unique in this regard.

Picnicking in play spaces is desirable. For some communities and families, the experience of gathering in public open spaces is greatly enhanced by providing hot food. Providing well located tables and seating and areas where food can be prepared, cooked and cleaned up is an important consideration. Council does not permit casual use of play spaces for hangi, umu and fire/charcoal barbeques. Gas barbeques and cookers that are sensibly located are allowed. Obviously common sense prevails and the expectation is that the site will be left clean and litter free. Council provides electric barbeques at the following sites:

- Avalon Park
- Belmont Domain
- Scholfield Street Reserve
- Speldhurst Park
- Thousand Hands Park (Petone Foreshore)

There are no restrictions that prevent the public from bringing food to areas that Council manages as reserve. This includes play spaces. Food is sold from buildings and from mobile units at Council parks, reserves, sportsgrounds and beaches. These sites include:

Site	Facility	Notes
Avalon Park	mobile caravan	hot and cold food and drinks - operates some weekend and school holiday days
Mini Golf, Avalon Park	building	cold drinks and iceblocks - operates some weekend and school holiday days (Lions Club)
Avalon Pavilion, Avalon Park	building	catering and function, no sales to the public (Rotary Club)
Fraser Park	mobile caravan	operates some weekend days only
Hutt Recreation Ground	mobile caravan	hot and cold food and drinks on some weekend days
Lions Kiosk (Hikoikoi Reserve)	building	not open weekends (Lions Club)
Naenae Park	mobile caravan	hot and cold food and drinks on some weekend days
Petone Foreshore	mobile caravan	operates most days – weather dependent
	Building (Petone Rowing Clubrooms)	Full café – operates every day, all day and some evenings (Jetty Café)
Petone Recreation Ground	building	hot and cold food and drinks on some weekend days (Lions Club)
Williams Park	building	hot and cold food and drinks – sit down or take away

Council's Reserve Management Plans allow concessionaires to sell food and drinks on land Council manages as reserve. There are few restrictions to issuing

concessions. Potential concessionaires seriously consider the likely market before they make an application to Council for a licence or a resource consent.

Where there are similar services offered nearby it may be unreasonable for Council to support a proposal for a new service.

## Beyond 2011

Play provides opportunities for children and young people to learn about themselves by interacting with others and their environment. In terms of parks and recreation, specifically playgrounds, New Zealand is heavily influenced by designs and products that originate in North American and Europe.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century there was debate in North America about whether playgrounds had a place in parks. This seems incredible to us in 2012. One school of thought promoted the idea that playgrounds were more closely related to the school houses, which some believed would become the social centres for children and young people. In any case, the scenic qualities of parks took priority and playgrounds interfered with that ideal and it took time for them to be considered legitimate developments in parks. In the meantime the concept of dedicated recreation amenity sites gained a foothold, particularly in North America.

“Since the 1960s work of M. Paul Friedberg, FASLA, around public housing, and up through Chicago’s Millenium Park or Discovery Green in Houston, the lines between what makes a park, a playground or a public plaza are less rigidly drawn. Parks can be sculpture gardens, and even botanic gardens are drawing people with parklike amenities.” Landscape Architecture October 2010 p108.

In 2012 it is generally accepted that play can and should be happening in public open spaces. The public has an expectation that playgrounds will be available. The parks industry believes that playgrounds (in a variety of forms) are a worthwhile addition to many public open spaces and playgrounds have become standard fare for New Zealand local authorities.

## Play Spaces of the Future

Although we don’t have a crystal ball, when we look at trends in the landscape design industry, health industry and technology it is possible to speculate a little.

It seems reasonable to assume that the following trends will become or are already reality in New Zealand public open space:

- Provision for families seen as a great contribution to a city’s liveability
- Play seen as an important component of healthy communities Commitment to providing quality places, equipment and facilities that contribute to the quality of life of communities
- Increasing responsibility for government and local government to focus on physical activity and encourage healthy lifestyles, particularly in lower socio-economic geographic areas
- Focus making a site appealing to a family becoming more important
- Provision of a day and night experience
- Places and facilities/equipment which respond to users (eg sight and sound reactions) will be expected

- Provision of meaningful and rewarding playful environments that works at a number of levels eg adults and kids or imaginative and physical or natural settings with an educational function
- Possibly a return to “loose parts” design in some form at some sites
- Sites will incorporate smart phone technology eg I-phone, reading bar codes to expand the experience offered on site
- Play equipment will integrate outdoor gaming to engage and encourage physical activity

Sound sculptures are mainly made from stainless steel or bronze, and can be custom painted to order.



Sourced from:

[http://www.urbanplay.com.au/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=86&Itemid=61](http://www.urbanplay.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=86&Itemid=61) on 24 May 2011



PHOTO OF WET PLAY in Sydney

Sourced from: [http://2.bp.blogspot.com/\\_o7DThJc09bE/S1eEKpGaxCI/AAAAAAAABvI/-A5oprXTzwY/s1600-h/Water+Sculpture.jpg](http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_o7DThJc09bE/S1eEKpGaxCI/AAAAAAAABvI/-A5oprXTzwY/s1600-h/Water+Sculpture.jpg) on 31 September 2011



Water feature at Crown Casino Promenade, SouthBank by the Yarra River, Melbourne, Australia. A challenge for all ages to run through & evade the irregular & rhythmic spouts of water. The one that is random has buckets hanging from the top of a pole. When the buckets fill up they turn over and dump the water on the kids underneath.

Sourced from:

<http://forums.dpreview.com/forums/readflat.asp?forum=1022&message=14392562&chan gemode=1>

On 5 September 2011



Sculptural Playground, Schulberg  
Location : Wiesbaden, Germany

Sourced from: <http://www.landezine.com/index.php/2011/05/sculptural-playground-in-schulberg-by-annabau/>  
Sourced on: 5 September 2011





Water Mirror by Michel Corajoud in Bordeaux, France

Sourced from: <http://www.landezine.com/index.php/2010/05/water-mirror/>

Sourced on: 5 September 2011



Image of Robelle Domain, Queensland, Australia

This recently redeveloped site contains water play equipment plus play equipment that combines electronic gaming features

Sourced from :

<http://www.jmacconstructions.com.au/Gallery/RobelleDomain/AlbumID/513-44.aspx>

Sourced on: 19 September 2011

See also: <http://selector.com/au/suppliers/urban-play/news/icon-wins-the-2011-australian-international-design-award>

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The advertisement features several images of children interacting with climbing boulders. One child is sitting on a large, reddish-brown boulder. Another child is standing on a smaller, similar boulder. A large, white, textured boulder is being climbed by several children. A close-up image shows a young boy in a green shirt climbing a grey boulder.

Advertisement sourced from: Parks and Recreation, May 2011



Advertisement sourced from: Parks and Recreation, May 2011

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CIRCLE 3 ON PRODUCT INFORMATION FORM ON PAGE 79.

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Advertisement sourced from: Parks and Recreation, May 2011 Example of digital outdoor play equipment. Players race against each other and the clock.

## Future Action Items

Consultation carried out in 2011 contributed to the content of Go Outside and Play, which was adopted by Council in May 2012.

In the future, it would be useful to carry out qualitative and quantitative research to determine playground use and visitor satisfaction data. We'd like to know:

- Who's playing and who isn't?
- How much playing gets done?
- What kind of playing gets done?
- What kind of play do children and young people want to do?
- Where do people want to play?
- Is there anything preventing play?

The idea is to determine a benchmark for a number of measurements in 2012 and then repeat the research every 3 to 5 years to reveal trends.

Council participates in the NRB Communitrak Survey annually. In the future it may be possible to include questions about playground use and satisfaction in the survey. This would allow data to be compared with previous years.

The 2001 Hutt Valley Youth Survey is expected to be repeated in 2013 or 2014. This provides an opportunity for Council to gather information about sites and activities from 12 to 24 year olds. This data may assist Council to address the issue of lack of places to hang out/lack of things to. This issue was the third biggest issue identified by local 12 to 24 year olds (behind 1. Drugs and 2. Alcohol).

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