

Child care centres

Contents

1	Introduction.....	2
1.1	Objectives.....	2
1.2	Application.....	2
2	Site Selection.....	4
3	Building Design	6
3.1	Built form, scale and character.....	6
3.2	Setbacks.....	7
3.3	Building Materials and Colours	8
4	Amenity	9
4.1	Acoustic Amenity and Privacy.....	9
4.2	Safety and Security	10
4.3	Play Areas	10
4.4	Landscaping.....	12
5	Traffic, Parking and Pedestrian Safety	13
6	Hours of Operation.....	15
7	Fences	15
	APPENDIX A: Child care centre Facility and Equipment Requirements	16

1 Introduction

This section sets out objectives and controls to guide the location and design of child care centres with a key focus on ensuring the safety and well being of children and achieving a high standard of amenity for the site and surrounding locality, particularly adjoining residential land uses.

Child care centres that are appropriately located and suitably designed provide an important community service, contribute positively to the developmental growth of children and operate with minimal impact on the surrounding locality.

A variety of child care centres currently operate in Randwick City offering full time or part time childcare services. These include centres operating in purpose built buildings in residential neighbourhoods or within business centres. A number of child care centres are also co located with community services, public open space and schools.

Licensing approval for new child care centres or the expansion of existing centres must be obtained from the NSW Department of Education and Communities. To obtain a license, applicants are required to comply with various requirements of the *Education and Care Services National Law* and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations (E&C Regulations)*, which prescribe minimum standards for buildings, facilities and operational practices.

The Building Code of Australia also specifies relevant standards for child care centres relating to a number of matters including structural considerations, fire resistance, access and egress, services.

As a condition of consent, applicants must submit a signed statement or checklist to Council verifying compliance with both the *Education and Care Services National Law* and *E&C Regulations*.

Note:

Applicants should consult with the NSW Department of Education and Communities to determine licensing requirements prior to lodgement of a DA with Council.

Further information is available at (www.dec.nsw.gov.au)

1.1 Objectives

- To provide for the establishment of high quality child care centres that are located and designed to achieve a high level of safety, security, environmental health and amenity for their users.
- To ensure that child care centres respond positively to the context and setting and minimise adverse environmental impact in the locality.
- To deliver certainty to applicants, operators and the local community about the planning requirements for child care centres.

1.2 Application

This section applies to DAs relating to:

- Construction of a new purpose built child care centre.

- Conversion or adaptation of an existing building to a child care centre; or
- Expansion or alteration of an existing child care centre.

This DCP does not apply to home based childcare. Applicants for home based childcare should refer to the *Children (Education and Care Services) Supplementary Provisions Regulation 2004*.

This section of the DCP should be read in conjunction with:

- Part A – Introduction, Part B - General Controls, Part C- Residential Controls; and
- Other sections of the DCP for specific development types, locations or sites, if relevant to the application.

For heritage items or properties within a heritage conservation area, this section should be read in conjunction with the Heritage section of the DCP.

2 Site Selection

Explanation

Careful consideration must be given in choosing a suitable location for a child care centre as not all sites are appropriate for this form of development.

Site selection should take into account the needs of centre users in terms of safety, security and environmental health, and in residential neighbourhoods consideration should be given to ensuring that the commercial nature of a proposal does not unreasonably impact on upon the amenity of residents.

An acceptable location for a child care centre depends on a number of factors including capacity, scale, compatibility with neighbouring land uses, potential for exposure to safety risks and environmental hazards, vehicle movements, sightlines and pedestrian safety.

Objectives

- To ensure that child care centres are appropriately located and sited having regard to the environmental attributes of the locality and the health and well being of centre users.
- To encourage child care centres in accessible locations in proximity to public transport, business centres, community services and open space.

Controls

- i) DAs are to address the suitability and context of the proposal including:
 - Proposed size, number of children and age breakdown for the centre.
 - The number of staff to be employed.
 - Proposed hours of operation.
 - Nature of the location and surrounding development (including proximity to residential, business, industrial uses and sex services premises etc).
 - Likely effect of the development on surrounding properties (e.g. privacy, noise, solar access, views and the means to offset these effects).
 - Likely effect of the development on the road network in the surrounding area including traffic and on street parking availability.
 - Availability of on site vehicular access and parking.
 - Proximity to public transport.
 - Proximity to existing community and children's services.
 - Demonstrated demand for the service and identification of any special needs the centre will address.

- ii) Where a child care centre is proposed within 300 metres of a mobile phone tower, base station, transmission line easement or other source of potentially significant electromagnetic radiation, a report by a suitably qualified consultant must be submitted with the DA, assessing the potential exposure impact on the centre and its occupants.

Note:

As a general guide, preferred sites for child care centres are sites:

- Situated in proximity to workplaces, businesses, retail services and public transport.
- Co-located with existing educational, open space or other community facilities where parking is already available.
- Co-located in buildings that provide on site facilities for employers to reduce trip generation.
- Situated within purpose built detached buildings on accessible sites rather than semi detached dwellings, dual occupancy or residential flat buildings.
- Where there is less exposure to neighbouring residential development (e.g. large corner sites).
- Where safe and convenient vehicle access and pedestrian safety can be provided.

Note:

Child care centres on the following sites are discouraged:

- Narrow streets, one way roads and cul de sacs
- Areas near electromagnetic radiation (e.g. mobile phone towers)
- Proximity to LPG tanks
- Areas that have poor on street car parking/traffic conditions (e.g. high traffic volumes, poor sightlines etc)
- Steep sites

3 Building Design

3.1 Built form, scale and character

Explanation

The design of a new child care centre or extensions to an existing centre can impact on the physical and visual amenity of a streetscape. Child care centres that are sensitively designed in terms of built form, scale and massing can positively contribute to the streetscape and the character of the locality.

Child care centre proposals are required to comply with relevant RLEP height and FSR controls which apply to the site to ensure an appropriate built form outcome.

Objectives

- To facilitate the establishment of small scale child care centres in residential neighbourhoods.
- To ensure that the building's form, scale and massing complements and enhances the established or desired future character of the streetscape or site.

Controls

- i) For new child care centres or extensions proposed in the R2 Low Density Residential zone, the building design is to be similar to a dwelling house in terms of built form, scale, massing, roof design and articulation. Single storey buildings are encouraged for safety and access reasons.
- ii) For all other zones or locations, the building design is to complement the desired built form, scale and character for that particular zone or location.
- iii) Where a child care centre is proposed in a multi storey building (e.g. mixed use building) it must be located on the ground floor of the development unless it can be demonstrated that:
 - There are no viable alternatives for a location at ground level in the building or surrounding area.
 - With respect to a heritage item, the proposed child care centre on the ground floor would detrimentally impact on the heritage significance of the item.
 - Adequate access to play areas, solar access (particularly mid winter) and natural ventilation is available.
 - Adequate emergency access and egress is available.
 - Adequate access for pick ups/drop offs is available.
- iv) Architectural elements which articulate the front and other facades visible from the street frontage must be

incorporated into the overall building design to create visual interest.

- v) Avoid large expanses of blank and unarticulated walls.

3.2 Setbacks

Explanation

Building setbacks define the overall footprint of a building and the outer extremities of that building in relation to front, side and rear boundaries. They have a significant influence on the relationship between buildings and the overall character of the streetscape.

Importantly, setbacks can assist in protecting solar access and mitigate against noise and privacy impacts for properties that adjoin child care centres.

Setbacks for child care centres must generally be consistent with the requirements of the relevant zone.

Objectives

- To maintain a consistent rhythm of development that contributes positively to the character of the streetscape and locality.
- To ensure adequate separation between neighbouring buildings for visual and acoustic privacy, solar access and air circulation purposes.

Controls

- i) New child care centre developments or extensions must address the setback controls for dwelling houses set out in Part C, Section C3 of this DCP or demonstrate that alternative setbacks are suitable, having regard to:
 - The zoning for the site and alternative setback controls in this DCP (e.g. for business centres, master plan sites or key sites); or
 - The site location and prevailing setbacks of surrounding properties.
- ii) Increased setbacks may be required in certain circumstances having regard to privacy, solar access, to achieve reasonable view sharing with neighbouring properties and/or to provide the required amount of space for outdoor play areas.
- iii) The front setback area may only be used for access, car parking and landscaping purposes and not for the purposes of outdoor play areas and the like.

3.3 Building Materials and Colours

Explanation

The appropriate use of durable materials, finishes and colours can improve the visual presentation of a building and make a positive contribution to the streetscape. Building materials, finishes and colours should be harmonious with surrounding development and based on local colour cues.

Objectives

- To ensure that the building's visual appearance complements and enhances the established streetscape character.

Controls

- i) For child care centres proposed in residential zones, the selection of building materials, finishes and colours must have regard to the relevant controls set out in Part C, Section C3 of this DCP.
- ii) For child care centres proposed within a business centre, master plan or key site, the selection of building materials, finishes and colours must have regard to the relevant controls set out in the relevant section of this DCP.
- iii) For childcare centres proposed in special purposes or recreation zones, a range of high quality and durable materials must be used in construction which require minimal maintenance and facilitate articulation of the building form. The use of a single colour or material should be avoided.

4 Amenity

4.1 Acoustic Amenity and Privacy

Explanation

The appropriate design and siting of child care centres can minimise overlooking and noise intrusion to and from adjoining properties and maintain a high level of environmental amenity for children, staff and other centre users.

Objectives

- To minimise any potential adverse impacts on the visual and acoustic privacy of neighbouring properties.
- To protect the visual and acoustic privacy of children, staff and other users of the child care centre.

Controls

- i) Submit an acoustic report prepared by an accredited acoustic consultant. The report must demonstrate that:
 - Adequate site planning and building design measures are proposed to minimise noise impacts.
 - Noise levels generated from the child care centre, when measured over a 15 minute period at any point on the boundary of the site) will not exceed 5dBA above the background level.
 - Suitable noise attenuation measures have been incorporated into the proposal.
- ii) Orient new buildings and extensions to minimise overlooking, overshadowing and to preserve the acoustic amenity of adjoining properties.
- iii) Locate outdoor and indoor play areas, balconies and terraces and openable windows to minimise the direct line of sight to and from neighbouring properties.
- iv) Locate pedestrian access ways and ramps away from neighbouring residential properties where practical.
- v) Maximise the use of fencing, landscape buffers and window coverings to protect visual privacy and acoustic amenity for the centre and neighbouring properties.

4.2 Safety and Security

Explanation

An accessible, safe and secure environment is integral to the well being of all child care centre users. Measures to facilitate casual surveillance, territorial enforcement and access control are important elements of building design in order to maximise safety and security.

Objectives

- To ensure that building design and facilities are safe and secure for children, staff and other centre users.

Controls

- i) Entry to the child care centre is to be limited to one secure point which is to be:
 - Appropriately located to allow ease of access
 - Well lit and adequately sign posted
 - Located away from areas used for vehicle access
 - Located away from outdoor space used by children
 - Monitored through natural or camera surveillance
 - Limited to authorised persons only through the provision of an electronic security system such as swipe cards.
- ii) Where a child care centre is located within a building that also accommodates other uses, a separate and clearly marked entrance for the child care centre must be provided.
- iii) Incorporate windows on the front façade where possible to enable casual surveillance.
- iv) Where a proposed child care centre has a direct street frontage or vehicular access onto a classified road, identify additional safety measures (e.g. secure fencing, landscaping or other measures to prevent unaccompanied children from exiting the centre).

4.3 Play Areas

Explanation

Outdoor and indoor play areas are a vital component of child care centres as they facilitate the development of cognitive and physical skills and provide opportunities for social interaction.

Both outdoor and indoor play areas should provide for a variety of activities and experiences, while ensuring the safety and security of children. Importantly, the design of play areas should take into account the potential for visual, acoustic and privacy impacts on adjoining properties.

Objectives

- To provide attractive indoor and outdoor play areas that are safe, functional and support the developmental growth of children.
- To ensure that play areas do not compromise the amenity of adjoining properties.

Controls

- i) Outdoor and indoor play areas must be clearly identified and dimensioned on the submitted DA plans.
- ii) Locate outdoor and indoor play areas to the north or north eastern portion of the site where practical.
- iii) Locate outdoor play areas away from the main entrance, car parking areas or vehicular circulation areas.
- iv) Provide adequate separation between outdoor play areas and habitable rooms of adjoining residential properties.
- v) Design and layout of outdoor play areas should maximise clear sight lines and ensure ease of access to the main indoor play areas.
- vi) Indoor play areas must have adequate access to sunlight and natural ventilation.
- vii) Dedicate at least 50% of outdoor play areas for unencumbered activity and use a variety of surfaces (e.g. grass, sand, hard paving, and moulding).
- viii) Provide physical shading devices that are integrated into the design of the building. The material and colour of shading devices must be considered in relation to the streetscape and adjoining properties.
- ix) Toilets should be easily accessible from both indoor and outdoor play areas.

Note:

The following site requirements are based on the E&C Regulation and are to be used as a guide only. Applicants are required to illustrate provision of indoor and outdoor play areas on DA plans. The play area calculation should exclude parking and vehicular circulation, waste, storage, landscaping and utility areas.

Indoor Space	0-6 years old	3.25m ² per licensed child space of unencumbered space
Outdoor Space	0-6 years old	7m ² per licensed child space of useable outdoor space

4.4 Landscaping

Explanation

Landscaping can assist in integrating child care centres within the streetscape, contribute to creating a pleasant environment for centre users and enhance privacy and acoustic amenity for adjoining properties.

Objectives

- To ensure that landscaping maximises privacy and acoustic amenity for child care centres users and adjoining properties.

Controls

- Submit a landscape plan with the DA clearly identifying the following elements:
 - Location of play equipment
 - Location and extent of landscape buffers
 - Proposed planting including a variety of trees and plants to create visual interest and shade for children
 - Materials and finishes of outdoor surfaces.
- Landscape design is to reflect the prevailing landscape character of the streetscape in terms of scale and planting style.
- Landscaping must be designed to minimise the visual impact of the development on the streetscape and neighbouring properties.
- A landscape buffer of no less than 1 metre must be provided in the front setback where on site car parking and drop off areas are proposed in residential zones.
- A landscape buffer with suitable screening plants should be provided along the side and rear boundaries where practicable.
- Toxic, spiky or other plant species hazardous to children should not be used.

5 Traffic, Parking and Pedestrian Safety

Explanation

Traffic, parking and pedestrian safety are critical issues to be addressed in the design and ongoing operation of child care centres. Vehicular access, parking and drop off facilities should be integrated into the design at an early stage to address potential conflicts between pedestrians, local traffic patterns, streetscape character and residential amenity.

Objectives

- To ensure a safe environment for pedestrians, particularly children, motorists and cyclists in and around child care centres.
- To minimise adverse environmental impacts in the locality in terms of traffic generation and on street parking availability.
- To ensure that car parking arrangements are designed to enhance streetscape character and have minimal visual impact.

Controls

- i) Submit a Parking and Access Report with the DA, by an accredited consultant. The Report must address, but is not limited to:
 - prevailing traffic conditions
 - likely impact of the proposal on existing traffic flows
 - pedestrian and traffic safety
 - appropriate arrangements for safe and convenient pick up and drop off at the site.
- ii) A reduction in car parking controls in Part B, section B7 may be considered where:
 - The site is located in proximity to high frequency public transport.
 - The site is co located or in proximity to other trip generators (e.g. business centres, schools, public open space, car parks).
 - There is sufficient on street parking available at appropriate times within proximity of the site.
 - The development is not likely to result in any adverse impact on the safe operation of the surrounding road network.

Note:

Any proposed reduction in car parking requirements must be suitably justified in the Parking and Access Study or the Transport Assessment Report. Considerations will be given to the size and intensity of the proposal.

Vehicle Circulation and Carparking Design

- i) On site parking and drive through facilities must not visually dominate or detract from the streetscape character.
- ii) Car parking areas and set down and pick up points, must be appropriately marked, signposted and lit to ensure pedestrian safety.
- iii) The entry and exit of set down and pick up points should preferably be separated.
- iv) On site parking and vehicle manoeuvring areas are to be designed so that vehicles can safely enter and exit the site in a forward direction.
- v) Stack parking may be considered for a maximum of 2 car spaces.
- vi) Access driveways must not be located opposite or in the vicinity of road intersections.

Pedestrian Access Design

- i) Pedestrian access must be separated from vehicular access with clearly defined paths, signage and fencing.
- ii) Appropriate site distances and traffic calming measures may be required to ensure pedestrian safety.
- iii) Pedestrian pathways are to be a minimum width of 1.2 metres to allow for easy circulation throughout the site.

6 Hours of Operation

Explanation

The setting of appropriate hours of operation of child care centres should have regard to the potential for unreasonable disturbance to adjoining residential properties, and amenity impacts to the surrounding locality (e.g. traffic, noise etc).

Objective

- To ensure that child care centres hours of operation are reasonable and have minimal impact on the locality and the environment.

Controls

- i) DAs should include supporting information demonstrating that the proposed hours of operation are compatible with adjoining land uses, and in the case of multi storey buildings, that the proposed hours of operation are compatible with the upper level uses.

Note:

As a general guide, the hours of operation for child care centres in residential zones should not extend beyond the core hours of 7:00am and 7:00pm unless suitable justification is provided (e.g. the proposal is located adjacent to a business centre or non residential land use etc)

7 Fences

Explanation

Fences within child care centres sites must be designed to ensure adequate privacy and security for child care centre users and adjoining properties while promoting a high quality streetscape.

Objectives

- To ensure that new fences complement the building and the streetscape in terms of materials, colour, height and rhythm.
- To ensure that fences are designed to maintain privacy for adjoining properties and the safety and security for child care centre users.

Controls

- i) Fencing is to be of a height and design suitable to contain noise generated by children's activities and compatible with the building and fencing materials used in the vicinity.
- ii) Child proof fencing and self closing gates must be installed around outdoor play areas and at the entrance to ensure the safety and security of children.
- iii) Fencing must not obstruct sight lines between pedestrians and vehicles.

Note:

Additional requirements on fencing are contained in the E&C Regulation.

APPENDIX A: Child care centre Facility and Equipment Requirements

The following list of requirements is based on the E&C Regulation and is intended as a guide only. Applicants should refer to the Regulation for a complete and detailed list of equipment standards and service requirements.

- Space requirements
- Laundry
- Craft preparation facilities
- Food preparation facilities
- Nappy Change Facilities
- Toilet and Washing Facilities
- Sleeping facilities
- Storage facilities
- Pools
- Telephone
- Play equipment
- First aid
- Fire safety
- Ventilation, lighting and heating
- Hot water
- Fencing
- Glass
- Cleanliness, maintenance and repairs