



Darebin City Council Early Years Infrastructure Plan 2021-2041: draft actions in full

The draft Early Years Infrastructure Plan 2021-2041 includes 18 recommended actions to deliver the Early Years infrastructure needed by the Darebin community over the next 20 years.

1. Monitor indicators of supply and demand across all early years services on an ongoing basis and review and adjust infrastructure planning as new information becomes available.
2. Work with providers across all early years services to optimise the level of service delivered from existing infrastructure by utilizing spare capacity where needed, adopting new schedules and operational models, utilizing innovative, flexible and best practice approaches including outreach and pop-up models.
3. Address functionality issues, where feasible and cost effective, at council-owned early years facilities to optimise service delivery and utilisation across all sites.
4. Provide additional service capacity in localities where additional capacity is needed through, where feasible and cost effective, expansion of existing facilities.
5. Consolidate maternal and child health locations to provide a full suite of two room facilities integrated with other family/children's services either at existing maternal and child health locations or alternative sites.
6. Review Council's existing property portfolio to identify opportunities to re-purpose properties for early years service delivery, where feasible and cost effective, in localities where additional capacity is needed.
7. Progress planning for the development of intergenerational hubs in the following localities:
 - 7.1. Reservoir West (Merrilands)
 - 7.2. Preston West
 - 7.3. Preston East

Intergenerational hubs to include at least two maternal and child health rooms, two kindergarten rooms and multi-use spaces including playgroup spaces. Assess need and opportunity to include long day care, occasional care and other services on a case-by-case basis.

8. Advocate and plan for the inclusion of a new community centre within or close to the Preston Market Precinct inclusive of two maternal and child health rooms, two kindergarten rooms and multi-use spaces including playgroup spaces. Assess need and opportunity to include long day care, occasional care and other services within the centre.
9. Progress planning for the development of new hubs in localities where unmet demand for early years services will not be met by expansion upgrades or other actions. These hubs should include a mix of services as required on a case-by-case basis.
10. Develop a property acquisition strategy to identify and acquire sites for new facilities where required to meet future needs.
11. Develop a 10-year program of capital works projects that identifies the planned Council investments in facility upgrades, expansions or new facility developments in order to deliver the actions and priorities outlined in this plan: to increase capacity where required and improve functionality and condition of facilities.
12. Explore the feasibility of mixed-use development (e.g. kindergarten/childcare, social housing and private housing/commercial) on council-owned or private land, through public private partnerships.
13. Develop an advocacy strategy to encourage investment in early years facilities from a range of sources including government and private developers.



14. Provide support to community-managed kindergarten and childcare providers, including those in non-Council facilities, to pursue infrastructure projects that will increase kindergarten and/or long day care places in areas where additional capacity is needed.
15. Work with services to support them to open their facilities up to other uses by the community at times when they are not being utilised for service delivery.
16. Review the current use and demand for occasional care in Darebin, the financial viability of occasional care service models and cost to increase supply. Identify options to increase supply if indicated by this review.
17. Review the current use and demand for playgroup spaces, and the functionality and suitability of current locations. Explore the feasibility of addressing functionality issues at existing sites and identify options to increase the supply of suitable venues if required.
18. Address infrastructure needs identified by the Toy Library review (review expected to be complete in September 2021).