1. Natural grass resurfacing - hard wearing kikuyu
2. Regrading with quality improved topsoil and sub-soil drains
3. Improved perimeter drains
4. Timber spectator seating and terraces
5. New nylon nets and moveable goal posts
6. New entry gates
OVAL REDEVELOPMENT

Introduction
On behalf of School Council, a working group has been formed to strategically consider the options and address the issues around the quality and cover of grass on the existing oval at Wales Street Primary School.

As it is important that this area become a more usable, attractive and safer part of the school grounds, this plan is intended to gauge feedback and support for proposed improvements to the oval.

Background
Consistent with the recommendations of the Landscape Masterplan, the existing oval is intended to remain as one of the key active play spaces at the School. Central to this is the need to cater for class activities, lunch and recess games, school community events as well as use as part of the After Care Programme. Prior to the commencement of construction of the new BER building in 2009, the School had two level spaces which were able to be used for ball games and active play. The construction of the new building on the lower eastern section of the site has removed one of these spaces. This, combined with many years of low rainfall, has meant that the condition of the grass surface has deteriorated. Access to water is not a major issue as there is an existing 65kl tank near the deck at the back of the Hall that is connected to an existing irrigation system and includes a provision for mains water top up when the tank is low.

Issues
There are a number of issues with the condition of the existing oval. These include:
- Poor grass cover and wear, particularly through the centre and around the goals
- Poor quality sub base and high levels of compaction of the sub soil
- Poor drainage
- Single cross fall and the concentration of channeling of runoff
- Damaged irrigation sprays and domestic quality of the system

The oval has never been professionally profiled or constructed but appears to have been locally top dressed and seeded over many years without the fundamentals of drainage, soil, irrigation and grass type being adequately addressed. Due to the high levels of usage that this area receives the above combination of factors means it is virtually impossible to maintain a healthy grass cover under the current conditions.

Proposed solution
Based on an assessment of the issues, costs and options, the preference appears to be to undertake a complete reconstruction of the oval area using a highly durable grass type. Rather than the space being designated as the oval, the working group believes that it should be considered more as the School’s ‘Village Green’ This means it will still be able to be used for ball games but also a range of other passive uses and activities. This approach may also include the:
- Re-grading of the oval to create a central crown and drainage to all four sides.
- Importation of quality imported topsoil to the entire surface.
- Addition of agricultural drains and a perimeter spoon drain.
- Use of a highly durable warm season grass (such as a Kikuyu or a couch turf grass).
- Installation of a new commercial quality irrigation system to connect to the existing water tank.
- Removal of the permanent goal posts with temporary posts used that can be moved to different locations thereby reducing wear.
- Potential inclusion of newer technology turf systems such as geotextiles or an anti compaction and moisture retention flake (such as Hydrocell), to further improve durability.
- Introduction of a professional turf maintenance regime.
- Possible relocation of the existing gates in the centre of the oval lower down the site to reduce pedestrian cross traffic.
- Possible introduction of a controlled use programme at lunch time (for example the early grades get to use the space 2 days with a rest day on Wednesday and the senior grades get use of the area on Thursday and Friday).

Synthetic Grass Option
The approach that many inner urban schools have adopted is to remove natural turf on ovals and replace it with synthetic grass. Whilst this has some benefits in terms of durability, usage and water use there are other issues to consider. These include:
- Very high installation costs.
- Recurring costs for replacement of the surface (life span approximately 10-15 years).
- Regular grooming and maintenance requirements.
- Heat build up and chemical fumes given off by the surface and rubber filling.
- Issues with infection from carpet burn type grazes.
- Sustainability issues around the manufacture of the material (petrochemical base), combined with a current lack of recycling technology or uses for worn material.
- The importance of natural surfaces within a school environment.

Conclusion
Based on the above factors, the working Group has elected to pursue the option for a high quality natural grass surface. Feedback will be obtained from School Council and School community prior to moving forward on the project.