

DOG OFF LEASH AREA POLICY

Intent To provide Council with a framework for the establishment, provision and improvement of dog off leash areas, fenced dog exercise areas, and prohibition and restriction of animals in public places to meet community needs and maintain public and animal safety.

Scope The policy applies to all existing and proposed dog off leash areas, fenced dog exercise areas and prohibition and restriction of animals in public places over land owned and/or controlled by Council.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Ensure that a suitable number of dog off leash areas and fenced dog exercise areas are provided to meet the needs of the community.
- Provide minimum area and improvement standards to meet user needs.
- Provide standards to inform consideration of new dog off leash areas.
- Locate dog off leash areas in suitable areas to minimise adverse safety and environmental impacts.
- Provide parameters to inform decision making regarding prohibition and restriction of animals in public places.
- Ensure the safety of people and dogs in public open spaces.

Standards

The standards required to meet this policy are set out in the document titled *Dog Off Leash Area Guidelines*. The standards can be amended as required at the discretion of the Executive Manager Community Spaces.

Implementation

This policy will be implemented as stipulated in the *Dog Off Leash Area Guidelines*.

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This policy is to remain in force until otherwise determined by Council.

Director Responsible for Review:

Lifestyle and Community

ADOPTED: 25/06/2014
CURRENT ADOPTION: 11/02/2026
DUE FOR REVISION: 11/02/2030
REVOKED/SUPERSEDED



Ken Gouldthorp
Chief Executive Officer

DOG OFF LEASH AREA GUIDELINES

The following document provides the framework and criteria to enable Council to make decisions to achieve the objectives of the Dog Off Leash Area Policy.

DEFINITIONS

Dog Off Leash Area – refers to a designated area where dogs are permitted to be off leash from a person that has effective control of the animal as stipulated by the relevant Local Law.

Fenced Dog Exercise Area – refers to a fenced dog off leash area. Dogs are permitted off leash in these areas by a person that has effective control of the animal as stipulated by the relevant Local Law.

Prohibition and Restriction of Animals in Public Places Area – refers to a designated area where certain animals, as specified in the relevant Local Law, are prohibited or restricted.

STANDARDS

Dog Off Leash Areas

Dog off leash areas shall be distributed evenly across the local government area and be located within easy access of most neighbourhoods.

Dog off leash areas are to be located:

- not less than 1km from another dog off leash area.
- In drainage areas (where practicable), suitable natural areas and locations that are not already highly embellished for recreation purposes.

Dog off leash areas are not to be located:

- On land that is leased or regularly used for organised sport;
- On land that has significant environmental or conservation value and/or contains wildlife habitat; or
- On land that is embellished for recreation purposes that attract significant use.

Dog off leash areas shall preferably have a minimum area of 5,000 sqm.

Dog off leash areas must contain the following improvements as a minimum:

- Tap with dog bowl;
- Signage indicating the space is a dog off leash area;
- Suitable seating (minimum of two seats, but determined by need); and
- Dog disposal bags and a bin.

Fenced Dog Off Leash Areas

Dog off leash areas are not required to be fenced. However, in some circumstances may trigger the need for fencing. Instances which may trigger fencing include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Proximity to existing playgrounds or other recreation facilities that attract significant use and may cause a safety issue for users;
- Proximity to areas which may cause a safety issue for dogs, such as busy roads, drains and hazardous areas,
- Proximity to areas with significant conservation value or wildlife habitat, and
- Any area deemed unsuitable without fencing.

Fenced dog off leash areas shall be considered in locations:

- Where suitable off-street car parking is available (where practicable);
- Where other sufficient and suitable land, such as a drainage reserves, does not exist;
- Where there is significant threat to the safety of dogs, such as a busy road;
- Where there is a potential conflict with other users, such as a playground; and/or
- Where Council deems there is a need.

Fenced dog off leash areas are required to contain the following improvements as a minimum:

- Tap with dog bowl;
- Signage indicating the space is a designated dog off leash area;
- Suitable seating (minimum of two seats, but determined by need);
- Dog faeces disposal bags and a bin;
- Shade for seating (either with a shade shelter or by suitable available tree shade); and
- Off-street car parking or suitable on street car parking

In areas subject to significant flooding, dog off leash areas shall not be fenced.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Suitable public consultation is required prior to approval of any proposed new dog off leash area, except where there is an administrative mapping error or omission that requires amendment.

REMOVAL OF A DOG OFF LEASH AREA

Council may remove a dog off leash area (fenced or unfenced) at its discretion, in instances where:

- There is an oversupply of dog off leash areas;
- There are records of significant and repeated animal/human conflict; or
- Any other reason deemed necessary at Council's discretion; if
- Appropriate public notification has occurred.

PROHIBITION AND RESTRICTION OF ANIMALS IN PUBLIC PLACES

Prohibited and restricted animals are prescribed in the relevant Local Law.

Animals may be prohibited or restricted in cemeteries, adjacent to swimming enclosures (stinger nets) at beaches, recreation parks and sporting areas where large numbers of people may congregate, natural areas of high biodiversity, natural areas where large numbers of people congregate for swimming or other activities, or any other area at Council's discretion where there is significant concern regarding human/animal conflict.

Appropriately located and designed signage is required indicating that certain animals are prohibited or restricted in an area.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation shall occur in the following manner:

- Review existing dog off leash areas as required and provide improvements to ensure the minimum standards in this Guideline are met. Improvements will be considered on an annual basis in the capital works budget.
- Fenced dog exercise areas are to be provided in accordance with the requirements of this guideline and will be considered on an annual basis in the capital works budget.

A register of dog off-leash areas and prohibition and restriction of animals in public places will be maintained by Council.

Council will provide information regarding dog off leash areas and animal prohibition and restriction areas on Council's website and through appropriate on-site signage.