


DOG OFF-LEASH AREAS IN THE CITY OF GLEN EIRA



 FINAL REPORT OF THE 2010-2011 REVIEW OF
OFF-LEASH PARKS

 Prepared for the City of Glen Eira

MAY 2011

LEVEL 1 160 JOHNSTON ST FITZROY VIC 3065 AUSTRALIA

t. +61 3 9419 7477

e. info@harlockjackson.com.au

f. +61 3 9419 7577

w. www.harlockjackson.com.au



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1 INTRODUCTION

In 2010, the City of Glen Eira initiated a comprehensive review of its dog off-leash areas. Council engaged Harlock Jackson Pty Ltd, specialist consultants in animal management, to conduct the review.

The off-leash areas had not been reviewed for 14 years and it was appropriate to conduct a comprehensive review of these provisions.

The methodology undertaken in conducting this review included the following:

- + Desk based review of all open space within the City of Glen Eira.
- + Inspection of all of Council's current off-leash areas.
- + Examination of relevant Council plans and policies.
- + Consultation with relevant Council staff.
- + The first round of community consultation was undertaken between November and January 2011 which included the following:
 - + 3 public forums.
 - + 40 in-park surveys of users of the current off-leash parks.
 - + 50 questionnaires mailed to stakeholders who were identified as having a potential interest in this issue.
- + Preparation of a Draft Report.
- + A second round of community consultation on the Draft Report was held between 29 March and 12 April. It was publicised by letters/emails to the identified stakeholders and those who had registered their interest or participated in the first round of community feedback, sporting clubs, subscribers to Council's E-newsletter and registered users of the Glen Eira "Have your Say" site. Copies were also left at libraries, Council service centres and the recreation services counter. The process was publicised in local papers and on Council's website.

Feedback received in the two rounds of consultation are summarised in Attachments 1-4.

2 CHANGES FROM THE DRAFT REPORT

A draft Report was released for public comment in March 2011. Analysis of the feedback received is contained in Attachment 4. Further changes recommended as a result of the second round of consultation include:

- + It is recommended that Harleston Park and Hopetoun Gardens be off-leash from 6-9am. The 20m on-leash threshold around the playground and/or BBQs in these parks would remain.
- + It is recommended that the part of Greenmeadows Gardens which is currently on-leash be available for off-leash exercise from 6-9am with the remainder continuing to be available for off-leash exercise at all times. The 20m on-leash threshold around the playground and/or BBQs in these parks would remain.
- + It is recommended that the on-leash zone for Oval 1 at Princes Park be extended to include the path between Ovals 1 and 4.
- + It is recommended that when the existing picnic tables within the off-leash area at Glen Huntly is upgraded that it be replaced with bench seats, (which would not be regarded as a picnic area pursuant to the Order).
- + It is recommended that the Code of Conduct and other education material include reference to advising sports clubs of the extent of their bookings.

These changes are integrated into the remainder of this report.

3 EXISTING OFF-LEASH AREAS IN GLEN EIRA

Section 26(2) of the Domestic Animals (Feral and Nuisance) Act 1994 provides the context for managing access to public places by dogs. It provides as follows:

26 (2) A Council may by resolution make an order under this section which may do all or any of the following-

(a) prohibit the presence of dogs and cats in any public place of the municipal district of the Council;

(b) impose all or any of the following conditions on the presence of dogs or cats in any public place of the municipal district of the Council-

(i) conditions as to the means of restraint of dogs or cats;

(ii) conditions as to the times at which the presence of dogs or cats is or is not permitted;

(iii) any other conditions that are specified in the order.

Council's designated off-leash areas are listed in Table 1. In some of the parks, dogs are only permitted off-leash in part of the park. Dogs are required to be leashed in all other parks and reserves and on streets and footpaths.

In designated off-leash areas, dogs must be leashed (maximum length 1.5m) if the dog does or is likely to worry, threaten, rush or attack any person or other animal.

Dogs must also be leashed in designated off-leash areas within 50m of:

- + The principal location of an organised sporting event.
- + Children's play equipment.
- + The entrance of a school during school hours and 15 mins prior to and after school hours.
- + A permanent barbeque or picnic area.
- + The Duncan MacKinnon Athletics Track.

Dogs may be exercised off-leash in designated areas providing the owner carries a leash not exceeding 1.5m in length sufficient to bring the dog under effective control and remains in effective voice or hand control of the dog as to promptly bring the dog under effective control should it be necessary.

Council is presently considering the development of a purpose designed Dog Agility Training Area at Marlborough Reserve, Murrumbena. The current proposal includes developing the north-western corner of the reserve that is currently used by soccer players during warm up and training, as well as by the community for general purpose

play/exercise areas. A purpose designed dog exercise facility is something that has been identified as something that would be beneficial to many Glen Eira residents.

TABLE 1: EXISTING OFF-LEASH AREAS IN GLEN EIRA

PARK NAME	SUBURB	PARK NAME	SUBURB
Allnutt Park	MCKINNON	Bailey Reserve	BENTLEIGH EAST
Boyd Park	MURRUMBEENA	Caulfield Park	CAULFIELD NORTH
Joyce Park	ORMOND	Glen Huntly Park	CAULFIELD EAST
EE Gunn Reserve	ORMOND	Duncan MacKinnon Reserve	MURRUMBEENA
Halley Park	BENTLEIGH	Marlborough Street Reserve	BENTLEIGH EAST
McKinnon Reserve	MCKINNON	Packer Park	CARNEGIE
Murrumbeena Park	MURRUMBEENA	Bentleigh/Hodgson Reserve	BENTLEIGH
East Caulfield Reserve	CAULFIELD EAST	Lord Reserve	CARNEGIE
Greenmeadows Gardens	ST KILDA EAST	Moorleigh Community Village Reserve	BENTLEIGH EAST
Princes Park	CAULFIELD SOUTH	King George V1 Memorial Reserve	BENTLEIGH EAST
Victory Park	BENTLEIGH	Centenary Park	BENTLEIGH EAST

There is off-leash space in all of the major parks within the municipality. The majority are on sports grounds and are shared with sporting clubs. However, there is a shortage of open space in the Elsternwick/St Kilda East area, consequently the only off leash opportunity exists in part of Greenmeadows Gardens.

Council has a local law that requires people to remove their dog’s faeces from streets, footpaths and public spaces.

4 RESULTS OF INVESTIGATIONS

4.1 DESK BASED ANALYSIS

ANIMAL MANAGEMENT DATA

Council has approximately 11,000 registered dogs. Data on the location of Glen Eira dog owners shows their spread across the municipality is relatively even.

GLEN EIRA'S PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Glen Eira has the lowest amount of public open space per thousand people when compared to other metropolitan municipalities. Increasing population and limited opportunities for the creation of new public open space are likely to result in levels of public open space remaining lower than in outer and growth municipalities. In addition, most of Glen Eira's public open space is dedicated to organised recreation and a range of sports including the higher grades of turf cricket.

This necessarily means that most of Glen Eira's off-leash parks need to be located on sports grounds and shared with organised sports.

4.2 FIRST ROUND OF COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Attachments 1, 2 and 3 provide a summary of the feedback received from the first round of consultation undertaken in the preliminary review. This consisted of 40 in-park surveys of people exercising their dog in Glen Eira's off-leash parks, feedback from 3 community forums and 50 questionnaires posted to a range of stakeholders associated with Glen Eira's off-leash parks.

Key themes arising from each are summarised below.

IN-PARK SURVEYS

- + Stronger presence of female respondents (60%) and those between 40-59 years (43%).
- + Most dog owners visit off-leash parks daily.
- + Most dog owners use only one (or up to 2) off-leash parks.
- + Respondents were all aware of the leash requirements in the parks they visit regularly.
- + Generally high level of satisfaction with off-leash areas (with the exception of timeshare issues with sports clubs).

- + People are wary of exercising their dogs near roads where the park has no fence.
- + High level of acceptance of the need to leash dogs near playgrounds, sports grounds, and picnic/BBQ areas.
- + Location of water bowls in on-leash areas is an issue – dogs are attracted to water bowls.
- + Signs are poorly located.

STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONNAIRES

- + Four out of the 16 respondents said dogs posed no impact on their activities.
- + For those clubs affected by dogs, the primary issues associated with dogs on ovals are removal of dog faeces and straying onto the ground during training or allocated sports times. There was also some concern about holes on sports grounds, and children's safety.
- + Concerns that the current provisions are not policed properly.

STAKEHOLDER FORUMS

- + Shared use of ovals is problematic.
- + Need more ovals in the park – it is illogical to have only one off-leash oval which is barred from dogs' owners when used for organised sport, when another oval could be available.
- + Prime times for people to exercise their dogs are 6-9am on weekdays, 4-7pm weeknights (later during summer) and on weekends.
- + Acceptance of the need for dogs to be leashed around play equipment, ovals, public events etc.
- + 50m (ie the 50m rule) is hard to judge. It also renders some off-leash parks unusable by dog owners.
- + It is hard to keep dog away from picnics – people throw scraps.
- + It is hard to keep dogs away from water bowls in on leash area. Why were they placed there?
- + Peer group pressure amongst dog owners is thought to be effective.
- + Lighting (eg coin in slot) would be welcomed.
- + How do dog owners know who has a formal booking with Council.
- + Dogs entering turf wickets are a problem.
- + Children need to be educated about the way to approach dogs.

- + Seats, shade, shelter and fencing along main roads would be welcome.
- + Information about off-leash areas could be improved.
- + Signs are poorly located.

5 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 OVERVIEW

With the exception of Elsternwick and St Kilda East, the number and distribution of off-leash areas in Glen Eira is considered appropriate. The north-west has a shortage of open space and as a consequence only one small off-leash area in part of Greenmeadows Gardens.

Sports grounds are good spaces for off-leash activity due to their large size, openness and intermittent use. However it is inappropriate to have unleashed dogs on sports grounds during times of organised play. This reduces the times available to dogs and their owners. There are also issues of unremoved dog faeces and damage to grounds.

These issues are particularly prevalent in Glen Eira because most of the off-leash spaces are on sports grounds and each is used most evenings and on weekends. This is unavoidable. Glen Eira is recognised as having the lowest levels of open space per capita across the Melbourne metropolitan area and a high proportion of its public open space is in the form of sports grounds. However the time used by sports clubs coincides with the primary times at which many dog owners exercise their dogs (except early mornings when the parks are not used by clubs).

We also recommend Council boost both its education and enforcement of the existing requirements to ensure dog owners comply with the requirements and keep their dogs under effective control in off-leash areas.

5.2 THE LIST OF OFF-LEASH PARKS

Having reviewed the existing context of open space in Glen Eira, we do not recommend that any off-leash areas be deleted from the list of off-leash areas. We have however recommended modifications to the provisions that exist across the municipality and within some of the parks. These are included in Table 2.

We recommend that two new parks in the north-west of the municipality be made available for off-leash dogs from 6am-9am each day. This is in recognition of the fact that there are very few opportunities available or appropriate for extended use in this part of the municipality. The parks to be added (off-leash from 6am-9am only) include Hopetoun Gardens and Harleston Park. In addition, it is recommended that the whole of Greenmeadows Gardens be available for off-leash dogs from 6am-9am and that the smaller area that is not time restricted be retained.

All other parks in Glen Eira were reviewed but none were identified as suitable candidates for additional off-leash areas.

5.3 THE 50M RULE

This rule has caused angst amongst users of some off-leash parks but is accepted in others. We found people are generally supportive of the need for a leash requirement around play equipment, public BBQs and picnic areas, organised sporting events and key sporting facilities (for ease of terminology we herein call it the "threshold distance").

We consider it important to retain a threshold distance around these facilities; however we consider the 50m threshold to be too high. It is difficult for people to judge 50m and in some cases this renders an off-leash reserve meaningless because the on-leash zone is so large.

Most councils around Australia have a requirement of this kind although the actual distance and requirement varies, e.g. some councils ban dogs within the threshold distance.

We believe a threshold distance of 20m around these facilities is more appropriate. This will also increase the space available to dog owners on sports grounds being used for training.

However, if a facility is fenced then it is considered acceptable that the area outside the fence be off-leash with no threshold distance. Where a facility is fenced the leash requirement should only apply within the fenced area.

Some people wish to see all playgrounds fenced where they are within or abut an off-leash area. There is good reason why playgrounds are not fenced. Through community consultation over many years, the community has expressed a desire to have fences removed to create parks that are easily accessed. In addition, fencing playgrounds is contrary to federal and state disability discrimination and equal opportunity legislation as it creates barriers for people with disabilities.

Council has had a number of renowned landscape architects assist in the design of its park master plans. All have acknowledged in their designs that contemporary park design rarely uses fences as park users want accessible open parks. Whilst some playgrounds are fenced this is only where there is a significant safety hazard close by such as a busy road, a train line or a large body of water.

Dog owners are required to have their dog under effective voice control at all times when off-leash. Fencing of all playgrounds that are near off-leash areas is not considered to be appropriate, however it is recommended that future planning consider ways to reduce conflicts through design, siting and/or the use of new plantings.

Recommendations:

- + *Reduce the 50m threshold distance to 20m.*
- + *Where a facility is fenced, the leash threshold requirement should only apply within the fenced area.*

- + *Future planning should consider ways to use design and siting, including new plantings to reduce conflicts.*

5.4 SPORTS GROUNDS

As stated above, sports grounds are good for use by off-leash dogs as they are large, open and used only part time for sporting purposes.

However there are five main issues with the use of sports grounds as off-leash spaces:

- + Limited availability of these grounds for dog owners given the high number of permanent sports bookings;
- + The fact that an off-leash sports ground will be unavailable to dog owners whilst it is being used for sport whilst another oval in the same park that is not in use is also unavailable to dog owners because it is on-leash;
- + Damage to the sports grounds – including damage to turf wickets and holes created from dogs using the sport ground;
- + Dog faeces that are not removed by dog owners; and
- + Dogs being exercised off-leash during training or matches.

These issues are discussed below.

AVAILABILITY FOR OFF-LEASH DOGS

The most popular times that people exercise their dogs include early mornings, 4-7pm (or later during summer) and on weekends. This was evidenced from our investigations in Glen Eira and is consistent with our experience in other municipalities. Apart from early mornings, these times coincide with the primary times when the grounds are used by sports clubs.

There is little that can be done about this because it is inappropriate to have unleashed dogs on sports grounds during times of organised play. However, it reduces the time available for dog owners in the desired times.

Our concerns about the possible increase in the number of bookings by sports clubs is unfounded because it seems grounds are largely booked to capacity by sports clubs.

We recommend Council consider extending the number of ovals available to dog owners in the following parks and as reflected in the recommendations contained in Table 2.

- + *Caulfield Park, Caulfield North*
- + *King George Memorial Reserve, Bentleigh East*
- + *Victory Park, Bentleigh*

We do not recommend that any top level sports grounds be made available for off-leash dogs. This includes those used for sub-district cricket and VTCA turf cricket.

DAMAGE TO SPORTS GROUNDS

Sports clubs are concerned about the damage caused to sports grounds – holes dug by dogs and damage to prepared turf wickets. Turf wickets need weekly maintenance during the cricket season and they are easily damaged, especially when wet.

There is no apparent solution to fencing off these spaces. However it was also evident in the consultation that many people are not aware of the need to keep dogs off prepared turf wickets and indeed this is not detailed in the S26(2) order or any explanatory material. Some dog owners fairly pointed out that whilst they tried to keep their dog off turf wickets, in practice this can be difficult.

Concerns were raised by some dog owners about litter left around sports grounds (apparently) by sports clubs, however further investigations suggest it is not sports clubs that are to blame for this. These spaces attract undesirable and illicit behaviour from other members of the community.

It is recommended that Council boost education of dog owners about the importance of keeping dogs off turf wickets especially when they are roped off.

DOG FAECES

Our own visits to parks show that not everyone picks up their dog's faeces. This is unacceptable especially on sports grounds. We recommend that Council increases both its education and enforcement of this requirement.

We understand that dog poo bag dispensers in parks are popular and we do not recommend that they be removed. However we do not recommend that Council increase the number of dispensers for the following reasons:

- + The high cost of bags and the staff resources to replenish them which could be used on other worthwhile animal management programs such as community education
- + The damage caused to dispensers
- + The need in our view for people to have a bag on them at all times rather than rely on a dispenser that may be inconveniently located or happen to be empty.

It is recommended that Council increases both its education and enforcement of this requirement.

PRESENCE OF OFF-LEASH DOGS DURING TRAINING AND MATCHES

There appears to be a high level of knowledge of the on and off-leash requirements in Glen Eira (or at least of the parks that people visit regularly). However many people still allow their unleashed dogs on grounds during match times and within the threshold distance during training.

We recommend that Council increases both the education and enforcement of this requirement.

5.5 REQUEST FOR TIMESHARE

Some people have suggested that all parks be available for off-leash activity between the hours of 7pm and 9am and that the "50m rule" not apply during these times.

Timeshare arrangements are commonly used in areas where there are limited options; eg inner city or on beaches. While it is often noted that Glen Eira has the lowest amount of open space of any Melbourne municipality, most areas of the municipality are within proximity to an off leash area. As a municipal-wide regulation timeshare is not appropriate for a number of reasons including:

- + There can be confusion about the cut off times
- + The parks are still used by other people including parents with children in the hours suggested
- + It does not overcome the problem of unremoved dog faces and damage to parks.
- + It does not suit everyone
- + In many parks, maintenance is undertaken in the early morning.

The exception to this is the three parks in Elsternwick/St Kilda East that are recommended to be made available for off-leash dogs from 6-9am (refer Section 5.2 above). This is in recognition that these suburbs have very little public open space and as a consequence presently have only one small off-leash park.

5.6 SPECIFIC PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

We consider the number, distribution and list of off-leash parks in Glen Eira is appropriate, particularly given the overall shortage of public open space in Glen Eira. We do not consider any should be removed or added to the list. However we have made a number of recommendations with respect to specific parks as listed in Table 2.

TABLE 2: EXISTING OFF-LEASH AREAS

ALLNUTT PARK, MCKINNON	
DISCUSSION	Park works well as an off-leash area.
RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications.

BAILEY RESERVE, BENTLEIGH	
DISCUSSION	The northern part of Bailey Reserve contains 3 softball diamonds. Two are already stone dust with the opportunity to update the third in the future. It is inappropriate for dogs to be exercised off-leash on these surfaces. In addition, the new Glen Eira Sports and Aquatic Centre is expected to be completed in late 2011. It will result in high pedestrian traffic through the northern half of the park; a further reason why this space is unsuitable for off-leash exercise.
RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications.
BENTLEIGH-HODGSON RESERVE, BENTLEIGH	
DISCUSSION	Off-leash dogs are inappropriate on the main oval. Play equipment is reasonably well separated from off-leash space.
RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications.
BOYD PARK, MURRUMBEENA	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area.
RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications.
CAULFIELD PARK, CAULFIELD NORTH	
DISCUSSION	Additional ovals are potentially available. The pathway around Caulfield Park is popular with joggers and walkers. It is inappropriate for off-leash exercise.
RECOMMENDATION	Make Ovals 3, 4 and 5 available for off-leash exercise. Make the path around the park entirely on-leash.
CAULFIELD RACECOURSE	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area.
RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications.
CENTENARY PARK, BENTLEIGH EAST	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area.
RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications.
DUNCAN MCKINNON RESERVE, MURRUMBEENA	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area.
RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications.
EAST CAULFIELD RESERVE, CAULFIELD EAST	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area.
RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications.

EE GUNN RESERVE, ORMOND	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area. The main oval hosts sub-district cricket and is inappropriate for off-leash exercise. The car park at the northern end of the park (presently off-leash) has a shared pathway running through it. It is inappropriate for the car park and shared path to be available for off-leash exercise.
RECOMMENDATION	Make the car park and shared pathway at the northern end of the existing off-leash area restricted to on-leash exercise.
GLEN HUNTLY PARK, GLEN HUNTLY	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area. Problem with picnic furniture in the off-leash area which restricts the space available.
RECOMMENDATION	It is recommended that when the existing park furniture within the off-leash area is upgraded that it be replaced with bench seats, (which would not be regarded as a picnic area pursuant to the Order).
GREENMEADOWS GARDENS, ST KILDA EAST	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory extended time off-leash area in the north side of the park. It would be appropriate to provide for off-leash activity in the remainder of the park from 6-9am. This is in recognition of the shortage of open space and off-leash parks in this part of the municipality.
RECOMMENDATION	Retain existing extended time off-leash zone on the north side of the park. Make the remainder of the park off-leash from 6-9am (excluding within 20m of the playground where dogs would be required to be leashed at all times).
HALLEY PARK, BENTLEIGH	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area.
RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications.
HARLESTON PARK, ELSTERNWICK	
DISCUSSION	Elsternwick has a lack of open space and as a consequence few off-leash parks. To address this it is proposed to make this park available for off-leash dogs from 6-9am. The 20m on-leash distance around play equipment and bbqs would continue to apply.
RECOMMENDATION	Make Harleston Park an off-leash park between 6-9am.
HOPETOON GARDENS, ELSTERNWICK	
DISCUSSION	Elsternwick has a lack of open space and as a consequence few off-leash parks. To address this it is proposed to make this park available for off-leash dogs from 6-9am. The 20m on-leash distance around play equipment and bbqs would continue to apply.
RECOMMENDATION	Make Hopetoun Gardens an off-leash park between 6-9am.
JOYCE PARK, MCKINNON	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area.

RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications.
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KING GEORGE VI MEMORIAL RESERVE, BENTLEIGH EAST	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area. Playground is well separated.
RECOMMENDATION	Make both ovals available for off-leash exercise.
LORD RESERVE, CARNEGIE	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area.
RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications.
MARLBOROUGH RESERVE, BENTLEIGH EAST	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area.
RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications. The consultants support the proposed dog park at this location.
MCKINNON RESERVE, MCKINNON	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area. The fenced northern oval hosts the highest level of VTCA turf cricket and is inappropriate for off-leash exercise.
RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications.
MOORLEIGH COMMUNITY VILLAGE RESERVE, BENTLEIGH EAST	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area.
RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications.
MURRUMBEENA PARK, MURRUMBEENA	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area.
RECOMMENDATION	No changes or modifications.
PACKER PARK, CARNEGIE	
DISCUSSION	<p>Satisfactory off-leash area although small. The path provides an obvious and legible separation with the playground. However the small size of the off-leash space accentuates proximity to the playground. Areas on the north side of the park could be made available for off-leash exercise. This includes the space that will be available when the two remaining houses are removed. The pathway in this area provides for an obvious and legible separation with the adjoining cricket nets. It would remain on-leash.</p> <p>The area in the vicinity of the former bowling club (west side of the park) is being developed as a passive open space with a bbq area. It is also adjacent to an aged respite care facility and is considered unsuitable for off-leash activity.</p>
RECOMMENDATION	Make available additional spaces on the north side of the park outside the oval and velodrome for off-leash exercise (excluding the pavilion, cricket nets, adventure playground area and area on the west side of the velodrome).

PRINCES PARK, CAULFIELD SOUTH	
DISCUSSION	Provides extensive off-leash areas. Oval 1 is a VTCA ground and is inappropriate for off-leash exercise. The shared path between Ovals 1 and 4 should be on-leash as this is commonly used by cyclists.
RECOMMENDATION	Make Oval 1 on-leash. This should include the path between Ovals 1 and 4. Others to remain off-leash.
VICTORY PARK, BENTLEIGH	
DISCUSSION	Satisfactory off-leash area.
RECOMMENDATION	Make second oval available for off-leash exercise.

5.7 EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT

It is important that Council continue to educate and enforce i) the effective control requirement ii) compliance with leash requirements where they apply and iii) the requirement to remove dog faeces.

Other groups using parks with off-leash spaces within them also need to be educated about the rights and responsibilities of people exercising their dogs off-leash. This should include sports clubs who should be advised of the spatial extent of their bookings.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The meaning of "effective control" of off-leash dogs is problematic.

Whilst it is recommended that Council continue to encourage dog owners to obedience train their dogs, we also recommend that Council develop a Code of Conduct that describes the types of behaviour sought in off-leash parks with an emphasis on respect, tolerance and understanding the needs of all park users. It is important that the Code of Conduct be developed for all users of parks and includes the message that dog owners have a right to exercise their dogs off-leash in an off-leash area.

INFORMATION SOURCES

Provision of any signage in parks is difficult:

- + The placement of signs is problematic especially where a park has many entries and where there are different zones within the one park.

- + A sign cannot easily convey complex information eg the many variations to the requirements.
- + Councils generally seek to avoid the unsightly proliferation of signage.

These problems apply to all Councils.

We found that most people only visit one or two off-leash parks and there was a high level of awareness of the restrictions that apply in the parks they visit regularly. The problem therefore exists for new visitors and for non dog owners who may need to know the requirements.

We note that some people said they worked out whether a space is off-leash by the presence of people exercising their dogs off-leash.

It is considered that whilst care should be taken in the placement of signage and it should be reviewed regularly, alternative methods should be implemented to convey the information. This should include a combination of paper brochures, media reports and online information with an emphasis on on-line sources. For example a simple brochure could be sent out with registrations with people being referred to Council's website for more detailed information.

The information on Council's website should be extended and improved:

- + *The list of off-leash parks is difficult to find on Council's website (it is contained within links to animals and then pet ownership).*
- + *It should include a graphical representation of each park's on and off-leash parts and details of the threshold requirements.*
- + *It should include information about picking up dog faeces, the code of conduct in off-leash spaces, effective control of off-leash dogs, the need to keep dogs off turf wickets, the threshold requirements, the meaning of an organised sporting event etc.*
- + *The information provided should be reviewed as park conditions change to ensure it is up to date.*

PARK RANGER

It is recommended that Council consider employing a special ranger or education officer to actively work with all users of Glen Eira's public open space to educate, promote tolerance and respect and the need for compliance with the requirements.

5.8 MOVING FORWARD

It is important that planning for dogs and their owners continue to be integrated into the broader recreation and open space planning processes.

It is recommended that a process be established to ensure that the needs of dog owners are considered in the development of any new plans and strategies including Park Master Plans. This includes:

- + Opportunities (if any) to increase the number of off-leash spaces available eg from acquisition of new land for public open space.*
- + Opportunities to improve the quality of existing spaces for off-leash activity. This includes opportunities to reduce conflicts with other activities and users.*
- + Ensure the location of water fountains and bag dispensers in parks is appropriate on a park-by-park basis.*
- + Ensuring any existing off-leash spaces are not compromised eg through the placement of new play equipment, picnic tables and BBQs, bicycle paths and fencing. This is particularly important because even small changes to a park layout can affect the space available for people to exercise their dogs. Continue to consult with the wider community as part of new park Master Planning.*

6 CONCLUSION

Dog walking is a popular form of exercise and recreation.

The City of Glen Eira has an appropriate number of off-leash parks however most are shared with sports clubs, which restricts the time available to dog owners. Unfortunately the times most popular with dog owners coincides with the times the parks are set aside for organised sports.

There is no alternative to providing off-leash spaces on sports grounds in Glen Eira. This is because Glen Eira has the lowest level of public open space per capita than any municipality in metropolitan Melbourne and much of the space it designed for active and organised recreation.

Having reviewed the open space context in Glen Eira, there are some minor modifications to the list of off-leash parks. New off-leash spaces (6-9am only) are proposed in Elsternwick and St Kilda East because this part of the municipality has a shortage of open space and as a consequence only one small off-leash opportunity.

In addition, some variations are proposed within parks. This is primarily to increase the number of ovals within a park that are available to dogs given the high number of permanent bookings by clubs. Spreading off-leash activity over a wider area should reduce wear and tear.

Oval 1 at Princes Park is proposed to be made permanently on-leash, however the other three sportsgrounds will remain off-leash.

We have recommended that dogs be leashed on the shared paths in EE Gunn Reserve, around Caulfield Park and between Ovals 1 and 4 at Princes Park.

The "50m rule" – that dogs be leashed around playgrounds, sports grounds, major sporting facilities and picnic areas - is considered to be a sensible requirement. However it is considered that the distance is too far. It is recommended that it be reduced to 20m and that it only apply where a facility is unfenced. Where a facility is fenced the leash requirement should only apply within the fenced area.

Feedback from Council staff and sports clubs suggests there is a significant issue with dog owners not complying with the leash requirements, not removing dog faeces from grounds and allowing dogs to damage grounds (digging holes and straying on to turf wickets). It is recommended that Council significantly increases both its education and enforcement of these requirements.

Attachment 01

FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM IN-PARK SURVEYS



IN-PARK SURVEY RESPONSE ASSESSMENT

QUESTION 1: HOW OFTEN DO YOU VISIT OFF-LEASH PARKS IN GLEN EIRA?		
FREQUENCY	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	FURTHER COMMENT
MORE THAN DAILY	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Less often at the weekends as conflicting use with sports teams. + Some of the other parks he uses are in Glen Eira, some aren't. Visits 2-3 parks a day. Says Dendy and Alma Road good parks, although not in Glen Eira.
DAILY	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Always mornings. + Visits various parks – Caulfield mornings and Princes afternoons. Does so for social reasons.
A COUPLE OF TIMES A WEEK	3	
WEEKLY	1	
FORTNIGHTLY		
LESS OFTEN THAN ONCE A FORTNIGHT		

QUESTION 2: HOW LONG DO YOU USUALLY STAY IN THE OFF-LEASH PARK WHEN YOU USE IT?		
TIME	NUMBER OF REPSONSES	FURTHER COMMENT
A FEW MINUTES		
UP TO 30 MINUTES	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Used to stay longer when dogs were younger.
30-60 MINUTES	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Will stay longer or shorter depending on the weather.
MORE THAN 60 MINUTES	7	

QUESTION 3: HOW WELL DO THE OFF-LEASH PARKS IN GLEN EIRA SUIT YOUR NEEDS, AND YOUR DOG'S NEEDS?

RESPONSE	COMMENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
OKAY	No comments	2
	Caulfield water fountains in annoying position.	1
	"Fine"	2
	Summer okay, but in winter there is no light so cannot walk dogs off-leash	1
	Packer – off-leash area near playground is inappropriate	1
	Weekdays parks are great, but at weekends they are not. The problem is that sports teams dominate the ovals which are off-leash so dog owners left with only on-leash exercise areas. (Caulfield Park)	1
	Clean and well-maintained park (Caulfield)	2
WELL	No comments made	7
	But limited space overall in GE	1
	Large in size (Caulfield)	2
	Large in size (Princes)	3
	Generally pleasant areas to be.	5
	Social side of activity	2
	Good range of parks and options in Glen Eira.	3
	Fenced area of Princes great.	1
	Dogs are all friends	1
	Close to home	3

QUESTION 4: BEARING IN MIND THE NEEDS OF ALL PARK VISITORS, HOW APPROPRIATE DO YOU THINK THIS SPACE IS AS AN OFF-LEASH AREA?

RESPONSE	COMMENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
APPROPRIATE	No comments	6
	"wonderful"/"really good"	7
	"fairly good"	3
	Have no issues	1
	Very social – good for owners too.	1
	Good but needs to be better awareness about off-leash areas in the community so other park users know where dogs will be running off-leash and can change behaviour accordingly.	1
	Allnut perfect b/c no sport	1
	Lord – good b/c play area separated	1
	Allnut's playground form natural safety barrier	2
	Very appropriate – the other ovals that are currently on-leash would also be very appropriate and keep dogs away from the sports.	1
	Large area (Princes)	1
	Packer – too near barbecues: should be on the other side.	1
	Princes – good because on and off-leash segregated. No confusion or conflict. Now that oval being re-done a bit pushed for space but otherwise good.	1
	Large area (Caulfield)	1
Fenced area of Princes great	2	
NOT APPROPRIATE	Due to the sheer volume of people who want to exercise their dogs off-leash – need more choice and opportunity and space. Suggested a 7pm-10am off-leash timeshare arrangement. (Caulfield)	1
	Causes conflict with the people playing sports.	4
	A fence to delineate the bbq area would be good at Allnut as people feed dogs when they go near it.	2

	Need to keep dogs away from small children.	1
	Inappropriate to share the premium turf area. Try to keep dogs off pitch but difficult	2

QUESTION 5: WOULD YOU SAY THAT DOG OWNERS KEEP THEIR DOGS UNDER EFFECTIVE CONTROL IN GLEN EIRAS OFF-LEASH PARKS?		
RESPONSE	COMMENT	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
ALWAYS	All dogs under voice control.	1
	Never seen an altercation.	2
	No comments	4
	If ever a dog is out of line or there is some conflict, people are pretty responsible about putting dog on-leash.	1
MOSTLY	Always a few irresponsible people, but generally everyone is friendly and responsible.	9
	No comments	6
	Everyone is courteous	1
	Other dogs steal our ball sometimes and owners don't care	1
	Still a lot of dog poo left around the grounds	3
	Have witnessed a few incidents that should not have occurred with off-leash dogs.	1
	Peer pressure in operation.	2
	Princes – those who do not have great control over dogs often used fenced area.	1
	Different parks have different character – some parks are characterised by more responsible dog walkers, while some are known for less responsible behaviours (Princes).	1
	Dog has been attacked by other dogs.	3
People tend to forget that others (people and dogs) do not want their dog all over them, or even near them.	1	
Invariably bigger dogs the problem (Caulfield and Muirumbeena)	2	

RARELY	
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QUESTION 6: HOW EFFECTIVE DO YOU THINK GLEN EIRA'S DOG OFF-LEASH INFORMATION SOURCES ARE?		
RESPONSE	COMMENT	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
EFFECTIVE	Most people aware that area is off-leash – question of whether signs good or if people simply learn from others' behaviour.	2
	Clear and obvious in Princes Park	2
	Allnutt – signs clear and on-ground legibility good.	2
	When Council sends out info with registrations it's great.	1
	Reads the newsletter/local paper which is informative.	3
	Have it on the fenced area of Princes Park– this is helpful and appropriate	2
	Poor location - away from the exercise areas/out of sight	3
	No comments made	1
	Even though booklet sent out each year still not clear what's what.	1
	Duncan MacKinnon – not clear	1
NOT EFFECTIVE	Bailey – sign incorrect, not many of them, bad legibility	2
	Complicated	1
	Poor content – not clear about exact borders and regulations, and picking up dog poo.	3
	Need pictures as well as words.	1
	Do not explain 50m rule well enough	1
	Needs to be more comprehensive.	1
	Difficult when there are so many entrances to a large park.	1

	Not enough signage in parks.	1
	Not many people knew about Harlock Jackson meetings	1
	Signs useless from all perspectives in Caulfield.	1
OKAY	No comments	4
DON'T KNOW	Do not even look at it because knows the rules and has been visiting parks for years.	3
	Only go to one park so do not notice signage.	1

QUESTION 7,8: ARE YOU AWARE THAT DOGS ARE REQUIRED TO BE LEASHED WITHIN 50M OF PLAYGROUNDS, PERMANENT BARBECUE AREA AND SCHOOLS AND SPORTS GROUNDS DURING TRAINING AND MATCH TIMES? IS THIS RESTRICTION APPROPRIATE?

AWARENESS	APPROPRIATE?	COMMENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	
YES	YES	24	11	
		People are often scared of big dogs – it is appropriate to have plenty of space between dogs and other users. Especially children		
		No comments made	3	
	NO	7	Safety has to be the first issue.	3
			50m about right as dogs sometimes hard to control so creates buffer.	
			Have to remember parks are for everyone	
			Princes is a well designed parks – off- and on-leash areas separated by the pavilion. Works well.	1
		50m too large an area. 20m-30m would suffice	8	
		Unable to be followed in many parks. No room for it in small parks.	1	
		Could be changed, say time of day.	1	
		Many people do not observe it so doesn't work	1	
		Many do not have dog under effective control so does not work.	1	
		Regulation stops dog walkers from walking on path when dog off-leash in	1	

				Bailey.	
				Hard to stop dogs running to bbq area where the water is – they cannot tell it is 50m.	
				Some sort of restriction is appropriate, but need sufficient space around for effective remaining space.	3
				Very difficult to follow in practice.	3
NO	4	YES	3	Even though didn't know about it thinks appropriate.	3
		NO			

QUESTION 9: FURTHER COMMENTS?

THEME	COMMENTS
PEACEFUL PARK	Do not have conflicts with sports teams or other people here at Caulfield Park.
TIMESHARE	7pm-10am would work well – then we can all know where we can go and when – no disputes. Not suitable for those who want to exercise their dog immediately after work.
LOCATION OF WATER BOWLS	Need to be near the off-leash areas – ones in Caulfield Park are on the far side of the pavilion in the on-leash areas. Hard to access.
EDUCATION	More education needed that off-leash areas mean effective control is necessary. More information needs to be readily available and distributed. About need to pick up poo. The information is actually available on the internet – people need to be aware of this and take initiative.
MORE OFF-LEASH AREAS	Would be great if there were more off-leash areas seeing as there are so many wasted opportunities for off-leash exercise in areas that are on-leash.
BIG DOGS V LITTLE DOGS	Caulfield Park a little troublesome – some of the people quite precious about their little dogs. There is socially induced segregation between the big dog owners and little dog owners. A bit of tension. This person prefers not to exercise here due to this tension. Goes to other park, where there is unspoken rule about big dogs exercising in one area and little dogs in another – friendly and safe. Man with little dog was complaining about big dogs being the ones who break the rules and ruin it for everyone (Caulfield Park).

FINES	Need more flexibility – signage is poor so how can we know exact borders?
FENCING/BARRIERS	<p>Natural barriers such as hills work extremely well for separating areas in parks, but otherwise fencing is appropriate to stop dogs going where not wanted. Also safety factor.</p> <p>Princes – enclosed oval is very safe and good for newer puppies or bigger dogs. Keeps them separated from other people.</p> <p>Lord – fencing just been taken away.</p>
SHARING GROUNDS	<p>Need a rotation system or something – some way of sharing the grounds fairly between users.</p> <p>Can see why sports teams and other people complain about untrained dogs. Not fair for them to have to deal with them.</p> <p>The general public need to know which areas are off-leash so they can avoid them if they are afraid or don't like off-leash dogs, and save the hassle for everyone else.</p> <p>Lord – Many people play golf there so makes it dangerous for dogs off-leash.</p> <p>Balance of interests paramount to successful park sharing.</p>
RUBBISH	Need to empty the rubbish bins more as often get filled with doggy bags.
RATES	We pay rates as residents and as registered dog owners – we should have fair use of park.
CHANGING RULES	<p>Don't really want anything changed. Strong fear that dog owners will lose off-leash areas.</p> <p>There was feedback that everything pretty good and no need to change.</p>
PARKS VISITED	Many people noted that they ONLY visit the park in which they were interviewed. Have strong preferences toward one particular park.
MARLBOROUGH DOG PARK	Quite a few people looking forward to it.
POO BAGS	<p>Need more</p> <p>They often disintegrate</p>
50M RULE	<p>Is a table a picnic area?</p> <p>Too difficult to measure and control dog over.</p> <p>Too large an area – should be shortened.</p>

INTERVIEWER'S COMMENTS

- + In Caulfield Park and Princes Park I found that many dogs were really not under effective control, and it was often other dogs and dog owners that were suffering. Yet the majority of responses were that dogs were always under effective control. The respondents were probably on the defensive and would say that regardless of what they thought, but I really thought that it was quite untrue. And even when off-leash dogs did go and hassle other people/dogs, there was very little apology and no urgency to stop the offending dog – the owners seemed to think that their dog would do not harm, regardless of what the other person/dog was experiencing. Seemed to be a lack of understanding and care.
- + Caulfield Park – there are four ovals in the park, and two are off-leash. At the weekend the two off-leash ovals are used for sports and the on-leash ovals are empty. The dog walkers view this as unfair and ridiculous. Apparently the reason for this is due to the barbecue area that separates the two on-leash ovals (from one another). The dogs would have to be on-lead between the two ovals which is logistically difficult, especially when there is no barriers, natural or otherwise.
- + Uncleared dog poo frequent on enclosed Princes Park oval.
- + Many people when questioned about the 50m restriction found that it was appropriate to have a restriction that separated off-leash dogs from other users, but found that the restriction could be improved upon, or needed re-jigging.
- + Without off-leash areas dog owners would be “stuffed” – dogs need to run. Otherwise they become uncontrollable.
- + Many people had a strong understanding about how important it is to walk dogs. They felt that seeing as it is so important they should be provided with better opportunity for dog exercise (off-leash)
- + Duncan McKinnon is perfect. Very clear separation by slope and fence great space.

Attachment 02

FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM STAKEHOLDER
QUESTIONNAIRES



STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTION 1: WHAT IS YOUR GROUP OR CLUB'S INTEREST IN THE DOG OFF-LEASH REVIEW?	
INTEREST	FURTHER COMMENT
USE LORD RESERVE DURING SUMMER SEASON	Use: Friday evening, Saturday AM and PM, Training Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 5.00pm to 7.30pm.
QUALITY OF PLAYING SURFACE AND HEALTH CONCERNS	Control activities and how the facilities are best managed
CONVERTING PLAYING SURFACE BACK TO ON-LEASH	
CRICKET CLUB – CENTENARY PARK	
GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL – RECREATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT	
JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB WHO USE PRINCES PARK OVALS 1 & 4	Ovals used are off-leash and effect respondents weekly
GENERAL CONTROL OF DOGS AND REVISION OF RULES	
TRAINING CLIENTS AT HODGSON RESERVE	In the surrounds there are always dogs off-leash
ORMOND GLENHUNTLY BASEBALL CLUB	We are ok with the dog off-leash policy, but seek council reinforcement of requirement that dogs remain on leash during a game or training session
USE CAULFIELD PARK FOR FITNESS CLASSES TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS 6.30PM	

QUESTION 1: WHAT IS YOUR GROUP OR CLUB'S INTEREST IN THE DOG OFF-LEASH REVIEW?	
INTEREST	FURTHER COMMENT
MANAGER OF FAMILY AND CHILDRENS SERVICES (GLEN EIRA COUNCIL)	Keen to ensure that playground areas remain safe for children to play without fearing dogs and ensuring any dog excrement is not accessible to children.
TENNANT OF PACKER PACK VELODROME	

CRICKET CLUB SHARING GROUNDS WITH DOGS OFF-LEASH	
CAUFIELD COBRAS SOCCER CLUB – VICTORY PARK (DURING WINTER SEASON)	
SHARE COMMON AREAS WITH DOG USERS – ON AND OFF-LEASH	
FOOTBALL CLUB	Interested in ensuring all stakeholders get reasonable access to recreational reserves.
ST PAUL'S MCKINNON JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB – MCKINNON RESERVE	

QUESTION 2: ARE YOUR GROUP'S ACTIVITIES AFFECTED BY DOGS BEING EXERCISED IN COUNCIL PARKS?

YES/NO	ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
YES	Poo	7
	Abusive owners	1
	Straying	2
	Impacts on training	4
	Dog use during allocated sports time	2
	Holes	3
	Children's safety	2
NO	No impacts	4

QUESTION 3: ARE ANY IMPROVEMENTS WARRANTED?		
YES/NO	IMPROVEMENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
YES	Signage	2
	Owners obligated to clean up dog faeces	2
	A more selective approach is needed to some surfaces	1
	Current procedures are not policed properly	5
	Remove dogs from sporting grounds	2
	Review on/off-leash areas	1
	50m from playground and activities rule	4
	Sporting ovals should be on-leash zones	2
	Dogs banned from playgrounds	1
	Dog owners act in a responsible manner	3
NO		

QUESTION 4: DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER COMMENT WITH RESPECT TO THE DOG OFF-LEASH REVIEW?	
COMMENTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + It is good this review is being undertaken + Interested to understand the parameters or measures placed on the review process + Sporting grounds are for sport not for dogs + Happy to co-exist with dogs at centenary park + Turf wickets + Dogs being on a lead + Incidents with dog owners during football training times on week nights where owners are rude and aggressive + Expectations that owners should abide by the rules if other patrons are expected to + Increased monitoring to ensure dogs are on-leash while games are in progress at EE Gunn Reserve + All premier ovals (usually oval 1) should be either dog free or on leash 	

Attachment 03

FEEDBACK RECEIVED AT 3 COMMUNITY FORUMS



ISSUE	SPECIFIC COMMENTS	PARK EXAMPLES
IMPRACTICABLE OFF-LEASH AREAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + In many parks, there are a number of ovals, but usually only one is set aside for off-leash exercise. One would be enough but when there is sport on the oval dog must be kept on leash. The other ovals are generally empty but they remain on-leash so dogs cannot be exercised anywhere in the park until the sport game or practice ceases. Why can't the other, unused, ovals be made off-leash and the ones used for sporting be on-leash? Would make more sense and reduce tension between users. + Some areas that should be off-leash just aren't – bushed areas, wide open spaces that no-one uses. Makes no sense. + Often forced into on-leash areas as all off-leash areas taken up by sports or Council maintenance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + E.E. Gunn Reserve + Princes Park – natural walking path in front of pavilion – on-leash so have to walk from off-leash, then put dog on-leash to go past pavilion, then back off-leash once out of 50m range. + Victory park. Forced to on-leash area.
50M RULE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + How can we judge how far 50m is from anywhere? + How does the dog know this? – This is where effective control comes in. + Water fountains placed at playgrounds so have to put dog on leash for it to go and drink. The dog doesn't know this and will run to water, and the owner finds it difficult an annoying. + Large area – hard to control dogs off-leash over this area. + Suggestion that 50m is brought down to 20m. + People barbecuing throw scraps from barbecue – there is no way you can stop a dog getting food, even under good voice control. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Boyd Reserve + Lord Reserve
AGILITY PARKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Why don't we have them? Other councils do and all over Europe. Why are there three new bowling greens and nothing for dog owners? 	
BEHAVIOUR OF OFF-LEASH DOGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + This is a reflection of their owners. Off-leash areas seem to encourage irresponsible behaviour in some dogs owners – just let dogs go and don't have them under any sort of control. No awareness of other park users. + Even other dog owners do not want dogs bounding up to them, let alone non-dog owners. + The dog owners present at all three forums said that peer pressure goes a long way to making dog walkers behave better. Ask them to pick up poo or control dog – seems to work or they just don't come back! 	
SIGNAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Difficult to understand in Glen Eira + Little of it. + Would be great if there was an information board that dog walkers as well as other users could check regularly for community information. 	
OFF-LEASH TO ON-LEASH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Extremely worried that current off-leash areas would become on-leash. 	

ISSUE	SPECIFIC COMMENTS	PARK EXAMPLES
TIME SHARE SOLUTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Many (from Packer Park) said time-share would be problematic – late winter nights and mornings not appropriate when usually walk dogs during day. + Bentleigh McKinnon forum enthusiastic about time-share concept. Early – midday – evening. + Problem of people ignoring it anyway. + Already a de facto time-share situation happening with sports times. Let dogs off-leash before early trainings, between morning and afternoon training, and after the evening training. + For much of the day park users are mainly dog walkers – this should be recognised in time-share arrangement. 	
LIGHTING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Why do sports clubs get lighting and dog walkers do not? B/c sports clubs pay fees. But dog walkers pay rates and registration. + Suggestion of coin slot operated lighting system. 	
ATTITUDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Dog-owners still feel as though dogs are negatively portrayed in the media. Need to change attitude of community and Council. 	
SHARING PARKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + In all three forums the point came up that those who do not like dogs should not go to off-leash dog parks. It is their responsibility as much as the dog owners. + Rostering sports around the ovals so all get a fair share. + How do we know who has an official park booking and who does not? Because we cannot interfere with official bookings but with the unofficial ones we have just as much right as they do. However they act like they are the ones who have the privilege. + Cyclists – always have to watch out for them along the walking track to Allnutt Park from Thomas Street – just step aside as they whiz along. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Allnutt track cyclists. + Bailey Reserve (many people from the third forum used this park).
DOG POO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Health issue. + “Yuck” factor. + Location of poo bags – peripheral (on way into park) vs right at the off-leash exercise area. (No win either way it would seem). 	
SAFETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Dog-dog attacks are more prevalent than dog-human attacks/rushes. This is a training issue. + Also, proximity of off-leash areas to road. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + One off-leash area at Caulfield Park too close to road, which is why they exercise dogs at one particular point.

ISSUE	SPECIFIC COMMENTS	PARK EXAMPLES
SPORTS TURF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Sports clubs, especially cricket, work very hard on the surface. They have to walk around and pick up other people's dogs' poo. The dogs also dig up the pitch, ruining it very quickly. + But sports clubs often leave broken glass and rubbish all over the parks. Two-way thing. + The orange plastic does little to stop the dogs going on the pitch. Cricket club representative mentioned that it is difficult to erect it every time. Is there a more solid, easier structure to stop dogs going on pitch? 	
EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Both children and adults need to be educated on how to approach dogs, and that dogs are not there for children's entertainment. Comes a point when dog will snap. Thence come the problems. 	
AMENITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Very few seats/benches, lights, water fountains. + Nothing really that doesn't cater to sports. + Shady off-leash exercise areas. + Bins – some people are too lazy to walk all the way to the bins, and want more of them. + Barbecues – the Council knows who hires them – why aren't users prosecuted when they leave such a mess and rubbish like dogs owners are for leaving dog poo? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + E.E.Gunn + Caulfield + Shade lost at Caulfield Park when off-leash areas changed. Just as important to humans as to dogs. + Allnuttt park barbecues.
SEASONAL ACTIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + People use parks differently in summer and winter – how do you cater for these differences? 	
SOCIAL CAPITAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Strong reasons for walking dogs other than dog/human exercise. + Increasing community involvement in looking after parks a good idea. Increasing awareness and action. 	
AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + There was a feeling that information about the rules of dog exercise and other park uses was not readily available. Internet, signage, on the ground information apparently not enough. + Information should be distributed to every registered dog owner, or even to all rate payers, as happens in Surf Coast Council (obviously smaller population). 	
CODE OF CONDUCT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Sets out rules for responsible behaviour for all parties. 	
FENCING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Called for along main road areas. + Around playgrounds – some disbelief that dog walkers would use it for agility training. + Don't want areas separated (apart from playground), but for the entire park to be enclosed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Caulfield + Packer + McKinnon reserve is fenced and park is well used and operates well.

Attachment 04

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK RECEIVED IN RELATION
TO THE DRAFT REPORT



SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF SECOND ROUND OF COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS		
COMMUNITY COMMENT	COUNCIL RESPONSE	RECOMMENDED ACTION
<p>Opposed to prime parkland being allocated to dogs.</p>	<p>Dogs need to be exercised and there are strong health and social benefits for dog owners from exercising their dogs. It is considered that the review achieves a balance between the needs of all open space users.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>Halley Park – large playgrounds and bbq areas should be fenced. The path should be the boundary not 20m. Is an exercise area and a basketball ring a playground? Large area fronting Jasper Rd that is poorly maintained – this could be good for off-leash activity. Why not make it off-leash from 8pm to 10am (and apply this to all parks) Make the off-leash parks more interesting for dog with trees.</p>	<p>The path is the boundary of the off-leash space with the exception of the standard threshold area around playground and BBQs. This standard applies in varying forms in many councils around Australia. Council's order relates to "children's playgrounds". This does not include an exercise area or basketball ring. The area adjacent to Jasper Road became degraded during the drought. It is now being restored as a passive area of open space that is inappropriate for off-leash dogs. Timeshare is not considered appropriate as outlined in Section 5.5 of this report except for the 3 parks proposed in Elsternwick and East St Kilda where there is a shortage of open space and as a consequence very limited off-leash space.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>There is no off-leash park within 20-25 minute walk of our home in Elsternwick. Why not make parks off-leash after 5pm in summer and 4pm in winter.</p>	<p>This request is partially accepted with 3 additional spaces in Elsternwick/East St Kilda recommended to be off-leash from 6-9am. It is inappropriate given the small size of the park and the presence of play equipment and BBQs for these spaces to be off-leash in the evenings when many people still use the park especially in summer. Timeshare is not considered appropriate in other parks as outlined in Section 5.5 of this report.</p>	<p>It is recommended that Harlestone Park and Hopetoun Gardens be off-leash from 6-9am. In addition, it is recommended that the part of Greenmeadows Gardens which is currently on-leash be available for off-leash exercise from 6-9am with the remainder continuing to be available for off-leash exercise at all times. The 20m on-leash threshold around the playground and/or BBQs in these parks would remain.</p>

<p>No mention of Packer Park in report. Why not include the area where the houses are to be removed and the area west of the velodrome where the bowls club was?</p>	<p>Packer Park is included in the report with a recommendation that the area where houses have been removed is proposed to be off-leash. Area to the west of the velodrome is proposed to be developed as a passive space and is inappropriate for off-leash dogs. The additional spaces proposed are considered to be an appropriate balance between the needs of all park users</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>At Packer Park there is very little space where dogs are not permitted off-leash. Extending it to the areas on the north side of the park is unfair and would cause a traffic hazard and annoy neighbours. No enforcement of leash requirements at Packer Park or Duncan Mckinnon Reserve. This comes at the expense of others.</p>	<p>Area where houses have been removed is proposed to be off-leash. This is not considered likely to create a traffic hazard. Enlarging the off-leash space would dissipate any effects from dogs over a wider area. Increased enforcement is recommended. The additional spaces proposed are considered to be an appropriate balance between the needs of all park users</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>Caulfield Park – we no longer use it because it is unfenced and bordered by busy roads. A fenced area would provide a safe area for dogs. Princes Park – if only one oval is available for off-leash exercise this leaves us nowhere to exercise our dogs when sport is on or the area is being re-turfed.</p>	<p>Ovals 3, 4 and 5 at Caulfield Park are now proposed to be off-leash. People can use parts of the parks that are further away from roads. However owners should only exercise their dogs in public spaces if they are able to retain them under effective voice control. 3 ovals are proposed to be retained for off-leash exercise at Princes Park.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>Victory Park – can we have another dispenser, 50m is hard to judge and it is difficult when the drinking trough is between the bbq and the children’s playground. We don’t know which oval is the principal oval so it is easy to make a mistake. It would be easier if we could have off-leash access from late evening to 8am.</p>	<p>This review did not consider specific number and placement of dog bag dispensers in individual parks. Both ovals are now proposed to be off-leash. Timeshare is not considered appropriate as outlined in Section 5.5 of this report except for the 3 parks proposed in Elsternwick and East St Kilda where there is a shortage of open space and as a consequence very limited off-leash space.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>

<p>South Caulfield Cricket Club would strongly object to off-leash dogs being allowed on Oval 1 at Princes Park. This is because it is a VTCA ground and has hosted VTCA grand finals over many years. Ovals 3, 4 and 5 are available for off-leash exercise.</p>	<p>The report submits that off-leash dogs are inappropriate on VTCA grounds.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>Could Harlestone Park in Elsternwick be off-leash from 6-7pm until 8am.</p>	<p>This request is partially accepted (off-leash recommended from 6-9am). It is inappropriate given the small size of the park and the presence of play equipment and BBQs for it to be off-leash in the evenings when many people still use the park especially in summer.</p>	<p>Recommended that Harlestone Park and 2 others in Elsternwick/East St Kilda be off-leash from 6-9am.</p>
<p>We are alarmed that council is considering removing the off-leash zones in Princes Park.</p>	<p>Only 1 oval at Princes Park is proposed to be entirely on-leash. This is Oval 1, which is a VTCA cricket ground. It is inappropriate for this oval to be available for off-leash dogs. The remaining 3 ovals would remain off-leash when sport is not being held.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>Lack of data and analysis of statistics, demographics. Lack of justification for the recommendations, restricted nature of the review.</p>	<p>All open space areas in the municipality were inspected and there were no other spaces deemed possible or acceptable for adding to the list of off-leash parks. It is considered that the final recommendations are an appropriate balance between the needs of all users of public open space.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>The limited parkland in Glen Eira does not permit any significant increase in off-leash areas. This does lead to conflicts. Education and enforcement of park rules/code of conduct may alleviate some of these conflicts. Doubts that reducing the "threshold" from 50 to 20m will give sufficient time for dog owners to apply corrective control of dog. Improve council website information. Default should be on-leash unless people know the requirements.</p>	<p>Increased education and enforcement is proposed as improved and extended information provided on Council's website. Reducing the threshold distance is considered appropriate on balance. Twenty metres is considered to be easier to judge than 50m and does not restrict the space available for dogs as much as the 50m threshold does. Dog owners are still required to have their dogs under effective voice control in all parks.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>

<p>Ten years ago Lord Reserve was a wonderful open paddock for people to use for a variety of purposes. Removal of the chain mesh fencing, lights, irrigation etc means it has been taken over by sports clubs.</p>	<p>Fencing was removed at Lord Reserve after consultation with the community. Glen Eira's parks need to be shared amongst a range of users. Dog owners' needs are recommended to be fully integrated into future recreation and open space planning.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>Doesn't want the change recommended for Princes Park. Off-leash spaces are a great way for people to get to know one another.</p>	<p>3 ovals would still be available for off-leash exercise at Princes Park.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>

ONLINE COMMUNITY FORUM

COMMUNITY COMMENT	COUNCIL RESPONSE	RECOMMENDED ACTION
<p>The path between the 2 fenced cricket ovals at Princes Park should be on-leash. It is a high use pedestrian path used by a wide variety of users including children walking to and from South Caulfield Primary School.</p>	<p>This comment is reasonable.</p>	<p>It is recommended that at Princes Park, the on-leash zone for Oval 1 be extended to include the path between Ovals 1 and 4.</p>
<p>Insufficient data used in the review. Why not survey all dog owners? Why not provide more open space for dog owners given their high representation in the community.</p>	<p>All parks and reserves were considered but it is considered that there are no other suitable candidates for off-leash dogs. The in park surveys were intended to be obtain qualitative feedback from park users. They were not intended to be a statistically valid survey. Glen Eiras parks need to be shared amongst all users of open space. It is considered that the final report is an appropriate balance between the needs of all park users.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>20m exclusion zone is a serious threat to children. Keep it at 50m. There are many irresponsible dog owners.</p>	<p>A 20m threshold applies in many other parts of Australia. It is a fair balance between competing needs.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>

<p>20 or 50m is not the issue, it is people terrifying their children by telling them every dog is a menace.</p> <p>Agree with change from 50 to 20m.</p> <p>Why not fence all playgrounds?</p> <p>More education of people that think all dogs are vicious.</p> <p>Can we have a greyhound playgroup?</p>	<p>Education program and code of conduct would include messages to non dog owners about the rights and responsibilities of dog owners using Glen Eira's public open space.</p> <p>Statewide education program undertaken by state government (taught in primary schools) aims to teach all children how to behave around dogs.</p> <p>Request for playground group is outside scope of study.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>There are irresponsible dog owners who let their dogs off the lead in playgrounds, which is a safety risk.</p>	<p>More education and enforcement is recommended in the report including a Code of Conduct.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>Agree with making more ovals at Caulfield Park off-leash.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>Agree with 2nd oval at King George Memorial Reserve being off-leash.</p> <p>Agree with reduction of threshold distance from 50m to 20m.</p> <p>Could you use orange mesh to protect turf wickets?</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Orange mesh barriers have been trialled and are very difficult for maintenance staff to use.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>Both ovals could be off-leash at Victory Park.</p> <p>There ought to be times when on-leash applies eg when sport is being played.</p> <p>Evenings and early mornings should be off-leash when no sporting events take place.</p> <p>Water bowls are essential.</p> <p>Bag dispensers should be beside every bin.</p>	<p>Both ovals are now proposed to be off-leash.</p> <p>Timeshare is not considered appropriate as outlined in Section 5.5 of this report except for the 3 parks proposed in Elsternwick and East St Kilda where there is a shortage of open space and as a consequence very limited off-leash space.</p> <p>Water bowls and bag dispensers will be considered on a park by park basis.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>

<p>The draft is confusing about Caulfield Park. I had always thought the ovals were off-leash. Signage should be clearer. This would solve arguments between users.</p> <p>Pond area is not clearly an on-leash area. I have to point this out to people continually.</p> <p>People jogging in park with their dog do not have it under effective control. They do not even see it defecate.</p>	<p>The report recognises that provision of signage is difficult when complex information is to be conveyed. This is not unique to Glen Eira. It is agreed that signage needs to be improved however the report recommends an increased focus on Council's website to disseminate the off-leash requirements.</p> <p>Increased education and enforcement is recommended.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>It is impossible to find off-leash spaces in Glen Eira that are safe ie away from roads. A review of all parks should have been undertaken.</p> <p>Need to educate all parks users.</p>	<p>The study included a review of all parks.</p> <p>Glen Eira has a shortage of open space generally and it is considered that there are no other parks suitable for off-leash dogs.</p> <p>Education will be aimed at all park users.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>Concern about sample size of in park surveys.</p> <p>No engagement of other park users.</p> <p>Council should provide fencing and appropriate signage in Caulfield Park.</p> <p>Sports club encroach outside the area of their booking eg by warming up outside the area. They get annoyed by dogs when the dogs are outside the threshold area.</p> <p>No good reason provided for playgrounds not to be fenced.</p> <p>How does Council know sports clubs are not responsible for leaving litter.</p> <p>It is sometime hard to identify legitimate sports activities that have a booking with Council.</p> <p>Need more well located and designed signage.</p> <p>It appears that the total amount of space available for dogs is not proposed to be increased.</p>	<p>It was not intended to undertaken statistically valid surveys. It was intended to obtain the views of a range of stakeholders, which it is considered, was achieved by this review.</p> <p>Section 5.2 of the report provides justification for why parks in Glen Eira are mostly unfenced.</p> <p>The Code of Conduct and other education material should ensure sports clubs are aware of the extent of their bookings.</p> <p>Park maintenance staff are aware of litter problem spots at sports grounds and the sources of that litter.</p> <p>Park bookings will be made clearer via the information to be provided on Council's website.</p> <p>Whilst it is suggested that more signage is warranted, this practice is extremely difficult to provide in multi user parks where complex information is to be provided. It is not suggested that signage should be removed just that there should be increased focus on information provided on Council's website.</p> <p>An increase in the space available for off-leash dogs is proposed by the new spaces added to the list and the reduction in the threshold distance from 50m to 20m.</p>	<p>It is recommended that the Code of Conduct and other education material include reference to advising sports clubs of the extent of their bookings.</p>

<p>Agree with most suggestions including 20m rule. Concerned about location of water and litter bags next to playground.</p> <p>Bentleigh/Hodgson Reserve has 2 playgrounds either side of the off-leash area which restricts the space available. A small fence on park side of the playground would fix most problems.</p>	<p>Bags and water will be reviewed on a park by park basis. It is considered that there is a satisfactory separation between the playgrounds and off-leash areas to not warrant fencing.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>I do believe that dog owners and sport clubs need to co-exist. It would make sense with the removal of access to one oval, that another oval have a fence around it and the easiest one would be the soccer field. It seems to have much less use than the others.</p> <p>Another possibility is to fence part of the parkland that runs along Hawthorn Road.</p> <p>Need a board listing sporting clubs times and a timer to activate the lights.</p>	<p>Three ovals would still be available for off-leash dogs. Fencing is not proposed for off-leash areas. The area adjacent to Hawthorn Road is a passive space that is not suitable for dogs.</p> <p>It is agreed that the sportsclubs booking times be accessible however it is recommended that this occur via Council's website.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>Only been a dog owner for short time. The requirements are very confusing and unclear. Most recommendations make sense but lack of thoughtful recommendations for specific parks.</p> <p>At Glenhuntly Park there is insufficient signage and it is misleading (seems to suggest you can exercise dog on oval). The space that is available is of little use. It is narrow and unfenced to Neerim Road, eastern side has picnic table. The most useful off-leash section is the area around the back of the oval towards the tennis courts. Wants the entire oval off-leash, add a fence along southern boundary and extend to northern section.</p>	<p>The study recognises that signage needs to be improved but it is also recognised that providing the information required is difficult to provide on signs and that this is not unique to Glen Eira. There will be increased focus on people accessing Councils website to obtain the correct information.</p> <p>The existing picnic table is due for replacement. It is recommended that the table be replaced with bench seats, which would then not be regarded as a picnic area pursuant to the Order.</p> <p>It is inappropriate to extend the off-leash area to the north side of the oval because of its proximity to the cricket nets.</p>	<p>It is recommended that when the existing park furniture within the off-leash area is upgraded that it be replaced with bench seats, (which would not be regarded as a picnic area pursuant to the Order).</p>
<p>Happy overall. Agree with the reduction from 50m to 20m. The report seems fair in balancing the needs of all users.</p> <p>Bag dispensers at Bentleigh/Hodgson Reserve are often empty.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>

<p>Doesn't want the change recommended for Princes Park. Off-leash spaces are a great way for people to get to know one another.</p>	<p>3 ovals would still be available for off-leash exercise at Princes Park.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>Seems strange to have off-leash space alongside playground when there is a fenced oval dog owners could use. Why not have timeshare.</p>	<p>Extension of off-leash space in Packer Park is proposed on the north side of the park where the houses have been removed. This is considered an appropriate balance between the needs of all users. Timeshare is not considered appropriate as outlined in Section 5.5 of this report except for the 3 parks proposed in Elsternwick and East St Kilda where there is a shortage of open space and as a consequence very limited off-leash space.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>Seems strange that there is an off-leash park at Packer Park that is alongside the playground when there is a fenced oval dog owners can use. Why is it harder to police a beach timeshare than Glen Eiras parks?</p>	<p>Extension of off-leash space in Packer Park is proposed on the north side of the park where the houses have been removed. This is considered an appropriate balance between the needs of all users. Timeshare is not considered appropriate as outlined in Section 5.5 of this report except for the 3 parks proposed in Elsternwick and East St Kilda where there is a shortage of open space and as a consequence very limited off-leash space.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>
<p>Packer Park – why can't you set times for dog owners to walk? Hope we can obtain more off-leash space.</p>	<p>More off-leash opportunities are recommended including by the reduction in the threshold from 50 to 20m. Timeshare is not considered appropriate as outlined in Section 5.5 of this report except for the 3 parks proposed in Elsternwick and East St Kilda where there is a shortage of open space and as a consequence very limited off-leash space.</p>	<p>No change to report recommended.</p>

