

DOG PARK IMPROVEMENTS CONSULTATION – FIVE DOCK AND TIMBRELL PARKS

In September 2018, Mayor Angelo Tsirekas announced his commitment to build a citywide plan for our community's canine companions and to undertake off-leash dog trials in areas identified as high demand for dog owners.

Over the past nine months we have collaborated with community members on strengthening off-leash dog provision in the City of Canada Bay and to inform the *Dogs in Public Places Strategy*, which is currently in development.

During this period, over 600 community members have provided their feedback on off-leash dog provision and trials undertaken via the engagement programs set out below:

- **Five Dock Park Plan of Management** – Stakeholder, User Group and Community Consultation (9 August to 7 September 2018)
- **Off-Leash Dog Trials** at Timbrell Park (south-eastern section), Lower Phoenix Park, King George V Park and Kendall Reserve (24 October to 20 November 2018)
- **Timbrell Park Off-Leash Dog Trial Extension** (18 December 2018 to 17 April 2019)

Community feedback has resulted in an additional three fenced dog-off leash exercise areas being established for our city, in Lower Phoenix Park, King George V Park and Kendall Reserve. Furthermore, at the Council meeting on Tuesday, 21 May 2019 the resolution set was to further consult with the community on:

- expanding the existing fenced off-leash dog exercise area at **Five Dock Park** and installing dog obstacles and agility equipment
- fencing the existing off-leash dog exercise area at **Timbrell Park** and installing dog obstacles and agility equipment

We encourage the community to collaborate with Council from 1-21 July to achieve improvements at both of these off-leash dog parks.

WHAT THE COMMUNITY HAS TOLD US

During the ***Four Off-Leash Dogs Trial*** consultation process, 186 community members provided quantitative feedback on general provisions in relation to off-leash dog areas:

- 93% of participants agreed that off-leash dog areas provide opportunities to socialise and strengthen community connections
- 90% of participants stated regular maintenance of off-leash dog areas was important to important
- 85% of participants stated the provision of a drinking fountain with pet bowl was important to very important
- 84% of participants stated the provision of dog litter bags and bins was important to very important
- 79% stated natural shade was important to very important
- 70% stated signage outlining Dog Owner Responsibilities was important to very important
- 70% of participants were concerned with dogs running onto nearby roads
- 69% stated a varied terrain / landscape was important to very important
- 67% stated it was important to very important to incorporate accessibility provisions for access and signage
- 60% stated close proximity to public parking was important to very important
- 58% valued the inclusion of agility equipment such as raised tunnels, recycled tyres, bar jumps, resting platforms and/ slalom
- 55% stated seating was important to very important
- 49% stated it was important to very important that off-leash dog areas are fully fenced
- 46% stated it was important to very important for off-leash dog areas not to be fenced – maintaining a designated location that is also available for other uses
- 28% stated providing separate areas for large and small dogs was important to very important

FIVE DOCK PARK

Five Dock Park is a well activated and valuable recreation and community space featuring:

- An active sports field with grandstand including toilets
- An under four year old children's playground
- A district skate park
- A half-sized basketball court
- Extensive passive recreation spaces
- Covered picnic and barbeque facilities
- Existing fenced off-leash dog area
- Five Dock Park Tennis Centre
- Five Dock Baby Health Centre

Five Dock Plan of Management – Discussion Paper Consultation

Options discussed by the community during the consultation process included:

- **Retain the fenced off-leash dog park and enlarge the fenced area to the east to include a larger open grassed area.**
Individual community comments included:
 - Extend east to/towards Ingham Ave
 - Enlarge dog park, but as two separated fenced areas for big/small dogs
 - Dogs need open space to run, not enclosures
 - Remove, too small, most dogs still using areas outside enclosure anyway
 - Reduce area
 - Reinstate former unfenced off-leash dog area near Tigers Five Dock Club
- **Install lighting to enable dusk/evening use of the fenced dog park.**
Individual community comment: especially for winter use
- **Install irrigation within the fenced dog park to assist in grass and landscape maintenance.**
Individual community comments included:
 - Poor grass maintenance
 - Better surfacing, is muddy when wet
- **Clarify and provide consistent signage (on-line, published and on-site)**
Individual Community comment:
 - Signpost park as off-leash dog area at entries
 - Enhance enforcement

Recent off-leash dog consultations

Many community members who participated in the other two above-mentioned consultations also raised concerns with the existing fenced off-leash dog park at Five Dock Park

- 'Cage of rage' due to the small restricted area
- 'Dirt bowl' resultant from small area being repeatedly utilised without ongoing maintenance
- Dogs require breadth of space for exercise.

TIMBRELL PARK

Timbrell Park is a well activated and valuable recreation and community space featuring:

- Multipurpose sports fields with amenity buildings including toilets
- The iconic all abilities Livvi's Play playground
- Large passive recreation area
- Covered picnic and barbeque facilities
- Existing off-leash dog area on the western side
- Livvi's Café with adjacent toilets
- Strong linkage to the Bay Run.

Recent off-leash dog consultations

Timbrell Park's existing off-leash dog area is located at the western side of Livvi's Playground, however, many local dog-owners requested the City of Canada Bay explore the possibility of utilising the south-eastern section of Timbrell Park as an off-leash dog area as they believe it more preferable for dog exercise as it is larger and more protected from Henley Marine Drive. This area of the park is a well utilised sports ground and therefore presented challenges.

The initial trial and consultation was undertaken from Wednesday, 24 October to Tuesday, 20 November 2018, with an extension to the trial undertaken from 18 December 2018 to 17 April 2019.

Over 400 community members provided qualitative feedback during the consultation periods, with strong support for a permanent off-leash dog area at the trial location.

During both trials and consultation periods there was a significant level of community interest and this issue evoked a high level of passion. It was recognised that the views expressed by many dog owners and many sporting stakeholders are in stark contrast, and a viable solution whereby both parties can be provided with their preferred outcome at this particular site was not identified.

Two options were presented at the Council Meeting held on 21 May 2019, with option two, 'Improve the existing off-leash dog exercise area at the western end of Timbrell Park as well as the existing fenced off-leash dog area in Five Dock Park' endorsed to be implemented.

Considerations presented for proceeding with this option included:

- There is a very high level of support from sporting clubs, representing a large number of sporting stakeholders
- Management and enforcement of responsible dog owner behaviours within defined fenced areas is considered the most advantageous for the community
- It provides a short-term improvement to the existing conditions whilst the Dogs in Public Places Strategy is completed, noting that it will

provide a holistic and strategic approach to increasing the number/availability of off-leash dog areas within the LGA for the community

- Addresses feedback received that the existing fenced off-leash dog exercise area at Five Dock Park is not large enough.

In future there may not be an off-leash dog provision at Timbrell Park, as Sydney Water have advised that they will utilise this portion of land as part of future stormwater canal naturalisation works. Sydney Water will be undertaking these works between 2021 and 2024.

WHAT IS PROPOSED?

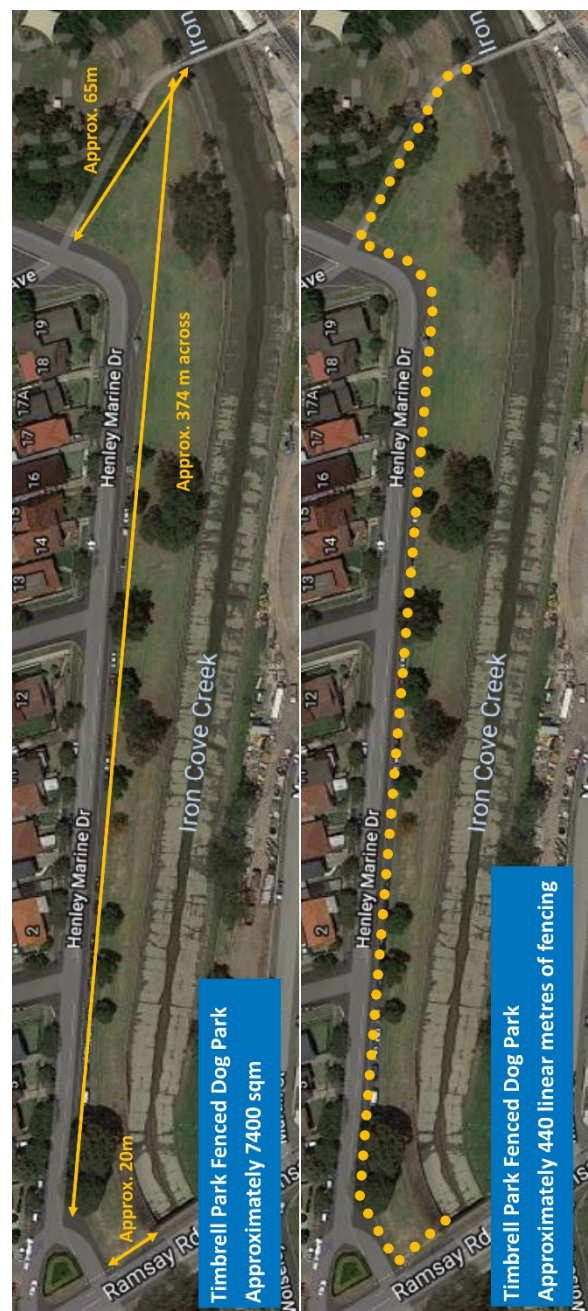
FIVE DOCK PARK

- Triple the size of the existing fenced off-leash dog park from 1,850 sqm to approximately 5,600 sqm
- Ensure the following amenities are sufficient and in working condition:
 - Drinking water fountain with pet bowl
 - Doggy bag dispensers and bins
 - Seating
- Collaborate with the community on obstacles and agility equipment
- Consider the installation of lighting for evening use
- Improve signage.



TIMBRELL PARK

- Create a fenced off-leash dog park of approximately 7,400 sqm
- Install 440 linear metres fencing adjacent to Ramsay Road, Henley Marine Drive and the eastern footpath positioned west of Livvi's Cafe
- Install a double entry gate
- Install the following amenities:
 - Drinking water fountain with pet bowl
 - Doggy bag dispensers and bins
 - Seating
- Collaborate with the community on obstacles and agility equipment
- Consider the installation of lighting for evening use
- Improve signage.



FENCED OFF-LEASH DOG PARK DESIGN

There are no adopted 'standards' as to recommended sizes for fenced off-leash dog parks. Some literature and a review of popular off-leash dog parks suggests the minimum size should be 2,000 sqm, however preference should be for linear rather than rectangular spaces and is dependent on site availability, topography and other land uses.

'The area should be big enough for dogs to run around and space themselves out. If there's not enough square footage available, a park can easily get crowded. Crowding can lead to tension among dogs and, as a result, fights can erupt'

- American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 2013

It is broadly accepted that larger off-leash dog areas are more successful as they result in:

- Reduced wear of the ground surface
- A space that can accommodate more dogs and their individual temperaments/sizes
- Opportunities for the incorporation of activity and rest zones.

COMMUNITY RECOMMENDED AMENITIES

Our community have previously stated that the following amenities are highly valued in off-leash dog parks:

- Drinking water fountains with pet bowls
- Doggy bins and bag dispensers
- Shade
- Seating
- Park rules signage
- Varied terrain/landscape
- Dog agility equipment.

EXAMPLE OBSTACLES AND AGILITY EQUIPMENT

Dog park agility equipment may be installed in a design which results in a continuous circuit providing diverse activity and rest zones.

Activity zones may include open areas for running, training area, climbing/jumping/balancing areas and natural play areas.

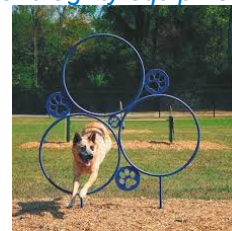
Typically, six to eight agility items are installed dependent on the size / dimensions of the area and spatial design.

Examples of some obstacle and agility equipment.



Table Dog Ramp

Image: Replas



Triple Loop Jump

Image: Frankston City Council



Jump Bars

Image: Doggie Play



Balance Beam

Image: Living the Dog Life



Training/Resting Platforms

Image: Living the Dog Life



Climbing Rocks

Image: Living the Dog Life



Weave Poles

Image: Living the Dog Life



Tunnels

Image: Whangarei Dog Park



Recycled Tyres

Image: Pinterest



Sensory Experiences

Image: El Dorado Dog Park

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

How can I contribute my feedback?

How can I contribute my feedback?

The City of Canada Bay is seeking community feedback for the selection of obstacle and agility equipment at Five Dock Park and Timbrell Park from Monday, 1 July to Sunday, 21 July, via:

- Completing a short survey at collaborate.canadabay.nsw.gov.au
- Email: parksupgrade@canadabay.nsw.gov.au

Outcomes will be reported back to the community in September/October 2019.