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YARRA RANGES

DRAFT PEOPLE AND DOGS IN PARKS PLAN

Background and Research Findings
May 2025

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1. Introduction

Dogs have the ability to bring people together by motivating them to go outdoors, engage in physical activity, and bond over their shared experience of owning a companion animal. Dogs are known to have a large range of physical and mental benefits for people at varying life stages. Council acknowledges that dogs play a key role in fostering a healthy and socially connected community for many.

This can, however, conflict with the safety and enjoyment of other members of community, and some public open spaces are highly valued habitat and ecological spaces that need protection from dogs. Parameters need to be established to ensure all users can safely and comfortably enjoy public open space and that valued ecology is preserved.

As the population grows and housing becomes denser, Yarra Ranges' open spaces are used by an increasing number of users and for an increasing diversity of purposes. Well-planned and thoughtfully designed parks with off-leash dog areas are essential to ensure the comfort and safety of all park visitors. Use by dog owners and their pets needs to be balanced with the interests and safety of other user groups.

Planning for dog-off-leash areas is important to provide a range of spaces and experiences for the Yarra Ranges community. These spaces may include a variety of equipment and features that differ from site to site, and can have a variety of enclosure options from fully open, elements of barriers or partial enclosure through to fully enclosed. There is strong community support for increased provision of a degree of enclosure to separate dogs and park users.

Why does Yarra Ranges Council provide dog off-leash areas?

Council provides a broad range of services, including recreation and open space, and community safety. Council also has legislative obligations regarding domestic animals, which in turn provide Council with powers to create local laws and orders. Council Orders include provisions for the management, safety and amenity associated with domestic animals.

Pets, and dogs bring company and meaning to the lives of many Yarra Ranges residents. Numerous studies, including the Yarra Ranges Domestic Animal Management Plan 2022-2026, outline the value dogs provide, often experienced and loved as a member of the family or household. They provide mental health support, and encourage exercise and socialisation of both owners and their dogs.

Dog off-leash areas maximise these community benefits by:

- Becoming social meeting places or activity hubs for like-minded residents, and provide an alternative recreation option for residents in their preferred mode.
- Providing a venue for the healthy socialisation of dogs, and support healthy animals through space to exercise, explore, develop skills and roam safely.
- Providing an environment where dog owners can exchange advice on dog management, and where responsible dog ownership principles can be promoted and reinforced.

- Allowing apartment and unit dwellers or people with less access to private open space to continue to own dogs.
- Providing a focal point for community education and training programs.
- Protecting the remainder of the park or open space from adverse impacts that can arise from unrestrained dogs, including activities that would be competing or incompatible with dog behaviour.
- Localise the health risks for park users associated with animal faeces and urine.

Why is the People and Dogs in Parks Plan needed?

Council's Domestic Animal Management plan identifies that "there is a need to recognise dog owners and their dogs as legitimate users of open space and promote an expectation of responsibility and consideration of others while enjoying facilities, parks, paths, and trails provided for their enjoyment."

Council has not previously had a plan for dog off-leash areas, resulting in uncertainty around the number and distribution of dog facilities. There has also been no agreement on what is considered adequate or affordable within Council's budget, and no consistent standards for what components should be included. This lack of standards or guidance has made it difficult for Council and community to assess requests for new or improved facilities. The Plan will help provide clarity for community around principles Council uses in its decision making for dog off-leash areas.

Who is the People and Dogs in Parks Plan for?

The plan is for:

- The community: the Plan outlines where dog off-leash areas should be provided, and to what standard. This includes dog owners seeking off-leash facilities in open space, and people using open space but who do not want to interact with off-leash dogs.
- Council officers who are responsible for:
 - Planning, designing, maintaining and managing dog off-leash areas.
 - Preparing and implementing the Domestic Animal Management Plan and Council Order for domestic animals.
- State and Federal Government departments and agencies: including but not limited to those who own/manage open space and dog off-leash areas in Yarra Ranges, as well as those responsible for managing partnership opportunities (such as grants).
- Open space industry: establishing and publishing dog off-leash area plans allows industry to share information, consider best practice examples, and where possible aim for a more consistent approach across the sector. This in turn leads to an improved outcome for the community.

What have we heard so far?

An initial community engagement process was undertaken during July and August 2024 using a variety of methods including:

- Project page on Shaping Yarra Ranges, featuring an online survey.
- Pop-up events at dog off-leash areas.

- Direct phone and emails.
- Social media.
- Yarra Ranges local e-newsletter.

Some of the key findings are summarised below:

How can dog off-leash areas be improved?

Top suggestions included:

- more dog park fencing (18%), and
- bins for disposal of dog waste (16%).

Other suggestions that ranked highly were the provision of drinking water fountains and more seating.

A total of 77% of respondents suggested that more dog off-leash areas are needed, and 65% indicated they currently use off-leash spaces.

Dog behaviour

It was found there was significant concern with dogs not being controlled, with a suggested need for education for dog owners on issues of dog behaviour, and more clearly defining the boundaries of dog off-leash to support non dog owners, and guidance on approaching dogs.

Other concerns were:

- Wandering dogs
- Dog waste facilities when walking dogs
- Dog, and owner, aggression.

The Plan seeks to further explore these themes and identify ways these issues can be addressed.

For further information regarding community engagement for the Plan, refer to the People and Dogs in Parks Plan – Community Engagement Report.

2. Planning for dog off-leash areas

Background

Yarra Ranges has the largest number of registered dogs in Greater Melbourne (31,904 dogs), and nearly 20 dogs per 100 residents. It also has one of the lowest ratios of humans per dog (~5.0 humans for every dog). Whilst every local government authority expects to have a population of unregistered dogs, Yarra Ranges has a relatively high registration rate of both cats and dogs, likely due to targeted campaigns to increase registration. Accurate registration data ensures Council can adequately plan for and meet demand, such as through the provision of dog off-leash areas.

Yarra Ranges also accommodates significant tourism on top of local needs. Consideration of national pet ownership rates and anecdotal feedback suggests this use of public open space extends to tourists and their dogs.

The benefits of dog ownership are well understood, and include contributing to family life, supporting physical and mental wellbeing, and socialisation of owners and dogs alike. Previous surveys undertaken by Council have seen a shift from owners previously considering pets as a companion animal, to now viewing them as a member of the household.

Planning for dog off-leash areas is crucial to achieving a high-quality network of spaces that meet the needs of the Yarra Ranges community. Dog off-leash areas:

- Allow people to take their dogs to a safe space where they can run freely and interact with other dogs.
- Offer a social gathering place that gives people the chance to connect with others in their local community.

Council needs to take a strategic approach to dog off-leash areas to achieve well-designed and well-maintained facilities that enhance the community's quality of life by offering spaces for recreation, education, and social engagement. These facilities must adhere to safety standards and be accessible to all users.

About Yarra Ranges

Yarra Ranges is the largest (by land mass) local government area in Melbourne, at 2,468km¹. It is located 30-110 kilometres from the CBD¹. We have 65 townships, with some urban areas but predominantly peri-urban and regional settlement.

Yarra Ranges has a population of approximately 160,137 residents (2024 estimated resident population), with just under half of residents (46%) living in urban areas. We have a greater proportion of older adults aged over 60¹, and a lower proportion of young adults aged 18–34 years old¹ when compared to the Melbourne average.

Yarra Ranges' population growth from 2025-2046 is projected to have 95% in the urban areas of Lilydale, Chirnside Park, Mooroolbark, Kilsyth, Mount Evelyn, Montrose and

Coldstream. With an estimated 21,952 additional residents by 2046 this will equate to an around 3,811 new dogs. This increase in need will likely require upgrade of existing facilities and creation of new facilities.

Strategic context

Legislative and statutory background

The Domestic Animals Act 1994 permits councils to establish local laws and orders concerning domestic animals such as dogs. The Council Order, amongst other things, sets out dog owner responsibilities, including in public open space and specifically in dog off-leash areas. The Act also requires councils to update its Domestic Animal Management Plan every four years.

The Local Government Act 2020 also confers powers to authorised officers to administer and/or enforce legislation.

Policy background

The development of the People and Dogs in Parks Plan relates to the following Council policies and strategies.

Yarra Ranges Council Plan 2021-2025

The Council Plan articulates the Community Vision 2036 that whether you live here or visit, you will see how much we care for Country, how inclusive and connected our communities are, and how balanced growth makes this the best place in the world.

The development of the People and Dogs in Parks Plan is related to a major initiative of the Council Plan:

Quality Infrastructure and Liveable Places

Quality facilities and infrastructure meets current and future needs. Places are well planned and are hubs of activity that foster wellbeing, creativity and innovation.

The Plan supports the aim to activate our community spaces and provide a variety of recreational opportunities. It outlines an infrastructure response that meets current and future community need and supports wellbeing.

Yarra Ranges Domestic Animal Management Plan 2022-2026

The Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) provides Council and the community with a framework for identifying and addressing matters associated with the management and wellbeing of cats and dogs. It identifies animal management compliance and education initiatives carried out by Council, and new initiatives identified to address emerging issues. It also identifies opportunities for community and Council partnerships to tackle challenges associated with pets (mainly dogs and cats) in the community, including impacts on the environment and native wildlife.

The current DAMP notes:

- There is a need to recognise dog owners and their dogs as legitimate users of open space.
- Local government authorities face significant challenges in terms of dog owner non-compliance with on and off-leash regulations, as well as in areas where dogs are prohibited. These challenges have been echoed in community feedback and Council officer observations.
- Planning for off-leash areas needs to be consistent, with space allocated based on a defined catchment or need.

The development of the People and Dogs in Parks Plan is an action of the current DAMP.

Yarra Ranges Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2013-2023

The Recreation and Open Space Strategy (ROSS) sets out directions for creating a healthy and active community and environment. It provides a framework for managing and improving sport and recreation facilities, parks, community spaces and recreation services, including the provision of dog off-leash areas.

The Strategy is currently under review and will include details of service levels across the municipality, the supply of public open space and the principles for decision on how public open space is used. The People and Dogs in Parks Plan is a key strategic document that sits under the overarching Open Space Strategy.

Other relevant Yarra Ranges strategies and policies include but are not limited to:

- Health and Wellbeing Plan (currently in development)
- Asset Plan 2022-2032
- Active Recreation Plan 2023
- Disability Action Plan (currently in development)
- Key Life Stages Plan (currently in development).

What are other councils doing?

Various councils have noted the impact of population growth (human and canine) and reduced housing block size, which places pressure on open space to support dog exercise.

Local government authorities acknowledge the benefits of dog off-leash areas, such as participation in civic and community life, health and wellbeing, reduced inappropriate off-leash behaviours and reduced impacts to sensitive sites. However numerous challenges are noted, such as conflicts between open space users, increased maintenance and dog waste.

Councils take widely different approaches to domestic animal management, which influences their approach to providing dog off-leash areas. Most Councils have strict requirements for dogs to be on-leash in all areas except for designated spaces, whereas a minority of councils allow dogs to be off leash almost everywhere in the municipality and some councils allow dogs to be off leash at most of their parks and reserves.

Provision

Whilst most councils do not specify a provision ratio for designated dog off-leash areas, the current ratio of neighbouring and/or similar municipalities ranges from one dog off-leash area to every 3,200 people, up to 1:36,000 (for comparison, Yarra Ranges' current provision is approximately 1:7,000). Other councils aim to provide 1-2 dog off-leash areas per local area, or within 20 minutes walking distance in urban areas.

While ratios are useful for comparison, they do not account for quality or access to dog off-leash areas. Planning these should consider population number and density, as well as quality, access, and role in the broader network.

Standards

Many councils apply a hierarchy to their dog off-leash areas (ranked either by catchment or size). Most will seek to provide supporting infrastructure which may be tied to hierarchy i.e. smaller or lower order dog off-leash areas have a lower level of embellishment.

The provision of dog parks through dedicated fenced areas varies greatly, with neighbouring councils providing anywhere from two to 11 dedicated dog parks. Fencing use also differs, with some councils fully fencing all off-leash areas while others take a site-specific approach. There are challenges with fencing, including:

- Owners have been observed to be less vigilant in supervising and maintaining effective control of dogs within fully fenced areas.
- The capital, maintenance and renewal cost.
- Negative impact of partitioning the broader public open space experience.
- Impeding movement and access in public open space.

However, councils often note that permanent constructed fencing should be used where required (for example, where conflicts exist and a lack of alternative options).

Lessons from dog off-leash areas elsewhere

The success and use of an off-leash area has been found to be influenced by various factors, including:

- The importance of location – ideally dog off-leash areas should be visible and accessible to passing traffic for owner safety and accessibility.
- The need for appropriately sized areas to limit potential conflicts between dogs.
- Features such as trees for shade, seating and other amenities.
- The importance of defining dog off-leash areas through signs, pathways, landscapes, clear information, and where appropriate, fencing.

Current provision in Yarra Ranges

Council currently manages 24 dog off-leash areas, in addition to sites owned and managed by others (such as Parks Victoria). One site (Hull Road, Mooroolbark) is owned by VicRoads and is currently occupied by the Level Crossing Removal Project.

Provision is concentrated in the urban areas of Yarra Ranges, however supply is also available throughout the municipality. Many residents outside the urban areas live on large properties that offer generous space for dogs to exercise and roam. The only existing fully fenced dog off-leash area is the trial site in Kimberley Reserve, Chirnside Park.

For planning purposes, the municipality is divided into four regions:

- Hills: south-west of the municipality, such as Kalorama through to Belgrave South.
- Upper Yarra: north-east of the municipality, such as Yellingbo, Warburton through to Reefton.
- Urban: west of the municipality and includes Chirnside Park, Coldstream, Kilsyth, Lilydale, Montrose, Mooroolbark and Mount Evelyn.
- Valley: north-west of the municipality, including Healesville and Yarra Glen.

However, the regions are used as a guide and it is acknowledged that population density, proximity, major transport routes and desirability of a given space mean that any boundaries are fluid in practice.

A full list of existing dog off-leash areas is included at Appendix I.

3. Issues and opportunities

In speaking with community members and researching the People and Dogs in Parks Plan, a number of issues and opportunities were identified and are summarised below:

ISSUE	OPPORTUNITY	IMPLICATIONS
HEALTH AND WELLBEING, PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY LIFE		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sentiment that there is less support for and prioritisation of investment in informal recreational activities (such as dog off-leash areas) compared to organised or formal recreation activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owners report exercising more (including as a family) because of their dog. Owners choose their recreation activities based on being able to take their dog with them. Community reported that dog off-leash areas enable their dog to socialise with other dogs. Off-leash areas were recognised for their importance to owners, with respondents stating that this is how they socialise or meet people. Well-exercised and socialised dogs are less likely to bark or have behavioural problems. Dog off-leash areas have led to establishment of a network of support for dog owners. Dog off-leash areas have also allowed dogs to create friendships with other local dogs. Off-leash spaces provide flexible exercise and recreation opportunities (i.e. after work). Off-leash spaces foster community pride and civic participation (i.e. volunteers creating and maintaining 'dog-poo stations' at Margaret Lewis Reserve). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dog off-leash areas have an important role in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging involvement in physical activity Fostering relationships and breaking down social (isolation) barriers, and ensuing mental health benefits and savings to the economy. Better exercised, socialised and behaved dogs. Creating and strengthening communities.

ISSUE	OPPORTUNITY	IMPLICATIONS
EQUITY AND INCLUSION		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female owners reported feeling unsafe in dog off-leash areas, particularly where they were unable to see who is entering the space (whether due to lack of visibility, lighting, or legibility of the dog off-leash area boundary). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More women and girls walk/exercise dogs than boys/men in Yarra Ranges. Female owners report that fenced dog parks support their use of dog off-leash areas, deeming them easier to assess those entering the space, and being able to evaluate whether to remain in the space. Lighting would also contribute to feelings of safety in off-leash areas. Older owners reported that off-leash areas provided increasing value to them, as age and/or mobility influenced their recreational choices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dog off-leash areas have an important role to play in supporting use and participation by women and girls, older adults, and people with disability.
PROVISION		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yarra Ranges currently offers 24 off-leash areas, but there may be shortages in some areas. Some community members reported not using dog off-leash areas, as they are too far from home or not easily accessible. Challenges associated with time-share sites such as sporting ovals (limited use for dog-owners; impacts of faeces on sport participants). Provision must be tailored according to context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite being the largest local government area in Melbourne, only 2% of the municipality is Council land. Council land has numerous purposes such as civic, community facilities and public open space. The limited amount of land available as public open space means there is existing pressure on the network. Furthermore, existing open space may include constraints such as water bodies, high biodiversity, or other functions (sport). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of existing and future provision will capture potential gaps in the network, and assess the fit-for-purpose of existing sites. An agreed level of service, informed by community feedback, should be established before assessing the network.

ISSUE	OPPORTUNITY	IMPLICATIONS
<p>Applying a blanket provision level across the municipality (i.e. providing per suburb, by distance or by population) would be inappropriate and result in some communities being overserved, and others underserved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback that the south of the municipality may be underserved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some community comments indicated a preference for improvements to existing off-leash areas, before adding new ones to the network. Whilst dog ownership is concentrated in the urban area, similar percentages of people in the rest of Yarra Ranges (Hills, Valley and Upper Yarra) report walking their dog for physical activity. The needs of urban and non-urban areas are different. However, dog off-leash areas provide benefits to non-urban communities through socialisation, different experiences and equipment, particularly where these residents feel physically and socially isolated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previously, it was thought that residents in peri-urban and rural areas have less need for dog off-leash areas, given they have greater access to large private open space to exercise their dogs. However, the community engagement feedback demonstrates that dog off-leash areas also provide significant value to these communities. Differential provision levels should be applied according to settlement type, however adopted levels of service must still meet the needs of peri-urban and rural areas.
NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many existing dog off-leash areas have high biodiversity values. As a result, there is potential for greater conflict between dogs and wildlife and vegetation in off-leash areas in Yarra Ranges, compared to inner-urban and growth area councils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ability to connect with nature in a number of our spaces was highly rated by the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create design and level of service standards that minimise and manage environmental impacts, whilst still supporting community to access and enjoy these spaces.
DESIGN AND FUNCTION		
<p>Open space function and boundaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varying responses regarding the current size of 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The space allocation and boundaries of existing dog off-leash areas require review, due to the

ISSUE	OPPORTUNITY	IMPLICATIONS
<p>spaces (some residents believe they are a good size, others believe they are too big).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently, dog off-leash areas comprise most if not all of a given public open space reserve. This results in conflicts between dog off-leash users and non-dog off-leash users simultaneously using the space. General open space infrastructure is subsequently placed within off-leash areas (i.e. paths, barbecues). Conflicts include off leash dogs near playspaces, non-dog owners attempting to use open space with small children, or picnic or sit/lie on the ground within dog off-leash areas. People who walk their dog on leash are compelled to walk through where dogs are off leash. This can create anxiety and reactivity in the on-leash dog, leading to conflict. Reports of conflicts between big dogs and little dogs/confident dogs and timid dogs. Legibility of off-leash boundaries is unclear or non-existent. Signage and wayfinding are poor and confusing. 		<p>numerous challenges associated with combining this use with other recreational functions within the one space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need to better define, contain and improve the legibility of off-leash boundaries. Clearer signage is required within parks and reserves, and at the boundaries of off-leash areas.
<p>Level of service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need to enhance the appeal and functionality of many existing off-leash areas in Yarra Ranges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of the Yarra Ranges dog off-leash areas, Kimberley Reserve was frequently cited as an example of good-practice. Opportunity to provide formalised water entry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a standard level of service governing the embellishment of dog off-leash areas. Assess sites against any adopted level of service and recommend a program of improvements.

ISSUE	OPPORTUNITY	IMPLICATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This includes improving infrastructure and landscaping, such as adding shade, paths, seating, drinking water for dogs, lighting, different surfaces, points of interest and equipment for dogs, and more bins. • Existing dog off-leash areas can have poor drainage or may be in poor condition. However, many are located adjacent to water bodies or within land subject to inundation, therefore the spaces are required to hold water to mitigate flooding to other land uses (such as residential). • Inconsistency in provision may be placing pressure on better embellished spaces in the network (i.e. reports of overcrowding at Kimberley Reserve). 	<p>points at appropriate sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst an improved level of service was desired, there was acknowledgement by the community that this is not appropriate or possible at every site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where feasible, consider improvements to drainage. This may include landscaping or water sensitive urban design as opposed to constructed drainage. • Provide enhanced accessibility at dog off-leash areas for older owners, owners with disability, or owners with mobility needs.
<p>Dog waste</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog waste, including faeces and urine, was frequently cited as an issue in both off-leash and on-leash public spaces. • Provision of waste disposal within parks and reserves was frequently mentioned as an improvement opportunity. • There is mixed feedback as to effectiveness of dog waste bags. The costs associated with maintaining stock and labour is high. • There are challenges for Council regarding safe and appropriate treatment of dog waste once collected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are innovative waste disposal opportunities being trialed by other municipalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a level of service for waste disposal. • Promote better waste disposal compliance through signage and education. • Consider trialing innovative waste disposal options.

ISSUE	OPPORTUNITY	IMPLICATIONS
<p>Fenced dog parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At present, there is one fully fenced dog park at Kimberley Reserve, Chirnside Park, with demand for more of these facilities. There are generally fewer fenced dog parks than unfenced due to the costs of construction and infrastructure, and also the need to isolate part of a public open space to achieve a fenced dog park. More fully fenced spaces was one of the most frequent responses regarding improvement opportunities. The lack of fencing deters owners from letting dogs off leash, and there are concerns that this is no longer fair or equitable especially when considering limited/no private open space in newer urban dwellings. Dog rush was often cited as a reason for fencing. Fencing should only be applied where the size of the dog off-leash area is sufficient (0.5ha is typically deemed the minimum size for a fully fenced area by other local government authorities). Councils have experienced increased conflict when fencing smaller dog off-leash areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is existing industry guidance regarding fencing of recreational areas that can be applied to dog off-leash areas in the municipality. Formalised fencing may aid in responding to the current issues caused by lack of obvious boundaries – fencing is highly legible. It provides opportunities for dog training progression and fostering the required behaviours (practice recall in an enclosed space, before moving up to an open space). Was cited by female owners as enabling them to assess who is entering the space, and plan their use accordingly. Provides separation of off-leash and on-leash dogs, particularly for reactive dogs that are on-leash. Provision of fencing acknowledges the reality that recall in dogs may be good but will rarely (if ever) be 100%. Provides protection of wildlife and areas with biodiversity value (creeks, revegetation sites). Owners and non-owners alike reported that they would feel more confident to use public open space where the dog off-leash area is fenced. Fencing may support older owners or owners with disability to continue to enjoy dog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The adopted level of service should include a variety of barrier treatments, including but not limited to landscaping, natural features (existing topography etc.) and constructed fencing. It must balance the benefits of barrier treatments against relying on them as a first line of defence for poor owner and dog control and behaviour.

ISSUE	OPPORTUNITY	IMPLICATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a significant capital and maintenance cost associated with formal, constructed fencing. • There are reports of dog owners being less vigilant when using fully fenced dog off-leash areas. • Constructed, permanent fencing may detract from the amenity of public open space, particular those spaces in Yarra Ranges with a strong natural landscape character. 	<p>ownership, companionship and exercise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fencing may be a required treatment where there is proximity to vehicles (car parks and roads, emergency vehicles and helipads), and other recreational infrastructure (i.e. playspaces, walking and cycling trails, equestrian, sports). 	
EDUCATION AND COMPLIANCE		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to raise community awareness about off-leash areas, including issues of etiquette and behaviour, and also informing people about the locations and features of each site, in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve safety and reduce risks • Promote inclusive open spaces for all park users • Protect the environment and wildlife • Encourage compliance with regulations. • Many dog owners (31%) do not currently use dog off-leash areas, with reasons including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncontrolled/aggressive dogs • Unsocialised or poorly socialised dogs • Poor recall of their own dogs • Lack of etiquette from other owners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was expressed community support for greater enforcement and penalties. • The provision of fit-for-purpose off-leash areas may lead to a reduction in inappropriate behaviour in on-leash areas. • Community expressed an interest in hearing good news stories regarding how dog registration fees have been used, work conducted by Council's Community Safety officers (i.e. reunited dogs and owners), and education and responsible pet ownership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider opportunities to improve monitoring and enforcement. • Provide better mapping and information available on the website. • Consider opportunities to increase the dissemination of information that is useful and interesting to dog owners.

ISSUE	OPPORTUNITY	IMPLICATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other owners not paying attention to their dogs or other dogs and people in the area • Owners not picking up after their dogs • The location of off-leash areas is not known. • The community has reported issues concerning sites not owned or managed by Council, however Council does not have jurisdiction to provide patrols and enforcement of these sites. 		

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Appendix I – Existing dog off-leash areas

LOCATION	ADDRESS	PLANNING AREA	SUB-PLANNING AREA
Belgrave Lake Park	33-41 Park Drive, Belgrave 3160	Hills	Belgrave Heights, Belgrave South, Belgrave and Selby
Cherylne Crescent Easement	94 Cherylne Crescent, Kilsyth 3137	Urban	Kilsyth and Montrose
Coronation Park	95-115 River Street, Healesville 3777	Valley	Healesville and Yarra Glen
Don Road Recreation Reserve	249B Don Road, Healesville 3777	Valley	Healesville and Yarra Glen
Elizabeth Bridge Reserve*	39-47 Durham Road, Kilsyth 3137	Urban	Kilsyth and Montrose
Hickman Place Reserve	7 Hickman Place, Seville 3139	Upper Yarra	Mount Evelyn, Wandin and Surrounds, Seville and Seville East
Hull Road Drainage Reserve**	456-458 Hull Road, Mooroolbark 3138	Urban	Chirnside and Mooroolbark
Johns Hill Lookout Reserve	84A Ridge Road, Kallista 3791	Hills	Hilltop, Kallista and Surrounds
Kalorama Memorial Reserve	1190-1196 Mount Dandenong Tourist Road, Kalorama 3766	Hills	Hilltop, Kallista and Surrounds
Kimberley Reserve	33 Kimberley Drive, Chirnside Park 3116	Urban	Chirnside and Mooroolbark
Lakeview Reserve	16B Lakeview Drive, Lilydale 3140	Urban	Lilydale
Lillydale Lake	435 Swansea Road, Lilydale 3140	Urban	Lilydale
Margaret Lewis Reserve	1/12 Kelso Street, Coldstream 3770	Urban	Gruyere, Coldstream and Yering
Minak Reserve	1/1 Minak Road, Selby 3159	Hills	Belgrave Heights, Belgrave South, Belgrave and

			Selby
Mooroolbark Retarding Basin	140 Maroondah Highway, Mooroolbark 3138	Urban	Chirnside and Mooroolbark
Mount Evelyn Aqueduct Trail Reserve	York Road, Mount Evelyn 3796	Urban	Mount Evelyn, Wandin and Surrounds, Seville and Seville East
Mount Morton Reserve	97 Mount Morton Road, Belgrave South 3160	Hills	Belgrave Heights, Belgrave South, Belgrave and Selby
Pembroke Retarding Basin	2-4 Wordsworth Street, Mooroolbark 3138	Urban	Chirnside and Mooroolbark
Richards Reserve	30 Swansea Road, Montrose 3765	Urban	Kilsyth and Montrose
Seville Recreation Reserve	20-28 Monbulk- Seville Road, Seville 3139	Upper Yarra	Mount Evelyn, Wandin and Surrounds, Seville and Seville East
Summerhill Park Drive Reserve	91A Blackburn Road, Mooroolbark 3138	Urban	Chirnside and Mooroolbark
Wandin East Recreation Reserve	3/2 Old Baker Road, Wandin East 3139	Upper Yarra	Mount Evelyn, Wandin and Surrounds, Seville and Seville East
Wesburn Park	2804 Warburton Highway, Wesburn 3799	Upper Yarra	Launching Place, Woori Yallock, Don Valley, Wesburn, Yarra Junction, Millgrove and Warburton
Yarra Glen Showgrounds	1159D Healesville-Yarra Glen Road, Yarra Glen 3775	Valley	Healesville and Yarra Glen
Olinda Precinct (former Olinda Golf Course)	75-77 Olinda-Monbulk Road, Olinda 3788	Hills	Hilltop, Kallista and Surrounds

*In addition to a permanent dog off-leash area, a time-share arrangement is in place for owners to use the sports oval as a dog off-leash area at designated times.

**Site is owned by VicRoads and managed by Council. Currently being used for the level crossing removal project, unclear if/when will be returned to the Council for management as public open space and in what condition.

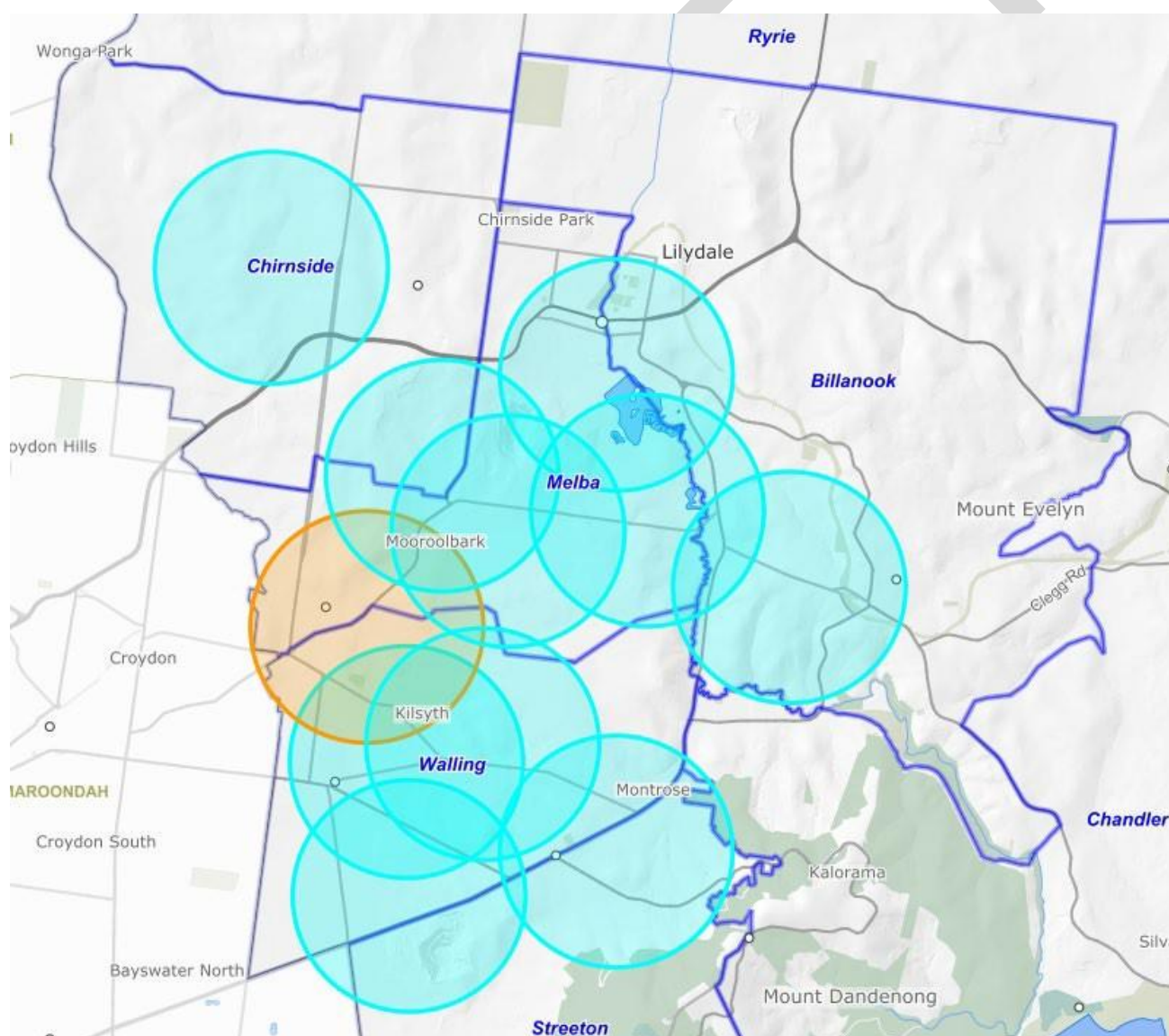
Appendix II – dog off-leash area map

Existing dog off-leash areas

These maps show existing dog off-leash areas owned or managed by Yarra Ranges Council. Although every effort has been made to ensure the maps' accuracy and completeness, they may contain errors or omissions due to changing circumstances over time.

Urban dog off-leash areas

Existing Urban dog off-leash areas are shown, with an approximate 20-minute walk time catchment applied. The VicRoads Hull Road site is not currently operational and is shown in orange.



Non-urban dog off-leash areas

Existing dog off-leash areas in the Hills, Upper Yarra and Valley planning regions are shown, with an approximate 10-minute drive time catchment applied.

