

Dog Friendly Spaces Policy

Version: 1.0

Date updated: 17 October 2017

Responsible Department: City Planning

1. Purpose

This document details Council's commitment to providing Dog Friendly Spaces, which encourage people and dogs to socialise and exercise within an open space setting. This policy provides direction on the provision and development of Dog Friendly Spaces within the City of Casey.

2. Definitions

Council	means Casey City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 1989
Councillors	means the individuals holding the office of a member of Casey City Council
Council officer	means the Chief Executive Officer and staff of Council appointed by the Chief Executive Officer.
Dog Friendly Spaces Plan	This document will be the reference document, which will provide officers with direction and recommendations to guide the implementation of the Dog Friendly Spaces Policy.
Dog Friendly Spaces	Are areas that are fenced and located within a larger passive open space which encourage residents and their dogs to socialise and exercise within a controlled environment.
Dogs on Lead In Public Places Order	That all dogs are to be under effective control of some person by means of a chain, cord or leash at all times in any public place other than a Council reserve and at no time shall a person in charge of a dog allow it to cause a nuisance or annoyance to any other person in a public place or Council reserve.
Dogs off Leash in Public Places	Dogs can be walked off leash in all Council Parks and Reserves within the City of Casey, except for 17 nominated reserves. When walking dogs off leash, dogs must be under effective control. Effective control includes dogs under voice control or being placed on a chain, cord or leash. Dogs must remain under effective control at all times whilst off leash. Dogs off leash must not be within 20 metres of children's playgrounds in all parks and reserves.

Council policy documents change from time to time and it is recommended that you consult the electronic reference copy at www.casey.vic.gov.au/policiesstrategies to ensure that you have the current version. Alternatively you may contact Customer Service on 9705 5200.

3. Scope

The Dog Friendly Spaces Policy covers the provision and development of Dog Friendly Spaces for use by City of Casey residents.

4. Context

Access to open space is an important part of people's lives and being outdoors encourages us to be active, escape from the everyday, relax and form social relationships.

The City of Casey Open Space Strategy's Vision is *"to deliver a connected network of quality and diverse open spaces now and into the future to improve the liveability of the City for residents and visitors."*

As highlighted in the Open Space Strategy there are a myriad of social, mental, physical, environmental and economic benefits that open space provides, including:

- Providing opportunities for physical exercise
- Providing places to socialise
- Connecting us with the natural world
- Providing pleasant places to be outdoors
- Offering restorative qualities

The Dog Friendly Spaces Policy supports the Open Space Strategy by encouraging residents and their dogs to exercise, socialise and enjoy all our parks have to offer.

Under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* Part 5A Section 68A, Councils must prepare a Domestic Animal Management (DAM) Plan at four year intervals to promote responsible pet ownership; the welfare of dogs and cats in the community; and protect the community and environment from nuisance dogs and cats.

The Dog Friendly Spaces Policy is supported in Council's draft 2017-2021 DAM Plan, which also recommends a review of the Dogs on Lead in Public Places Order to provide a more manageable number of dogs off leash areas for the municipality.

The following chart illustrates the relationship between Council Policies, the Open Space Strategy and the Dog Friendly Spaces Policy:

Council Policies

C21 Strategy
Council Plan
Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan
Municipal Strategic Statement
Domestic Animal Management Plan

Open Space Strategy

Key Pillars: Planned City, City of Trails, Green City, Active City

Recreation Planning Policies

Leisure Facilities Development Plan Policy
Paths and Trails Strategy
Skate Strategy
Sports Cycling Strategy
Playground Strategy
Equestrian Strategy
Dog Friendly Spaces Policy

Reference Documents, Implementation Plans, Land Use Plans, Capital Works Program

5. Policy

Based on the research and the Council policies listed above, the principles and framework below will guide the future planning and development of Dog Friendly Spaces within Casey.

- Encourage residents to be active and feel engaged with their local community by providing parks that foster social interaction through the inclusion of Dog Friendly Spaces.
- Provide 1-2 Dog Friendly Spaces in or adjacent to each of Casey's Urban Local Areas. Plan and advocate for Dog Friendly Spaces in a similar ratio in Casey's Growth Area.
- The appropriate open space site should be approximately 2 hectares in size; this is to ensure that a suitable sized dog friendly space of at least 0.5 hectares can be provided, and allow for a variety of other recreational opportunities and appropriate buffers between activities be achieved within the park.
- Where practical, locate Dog Friendly Spaces along open space corridors to improve accessibility and flexibility of the space.

- Where appropriate utilise linear-shaped open space to promote physical exercise by encouraging people to walk around the space. Irregular shapes and undulating topography can add appeal to the space, therefore may be considered.
- Dog Friendly Spaces must be fenced with multiple double-gate entries, drinking fountain with dog bowl, a bin, natural shade and landscaping, seating and signage.
- Dog Friendly Spaces are to be maintained at the same level as a Social Family Recreation Parks. This is a level higher than basic maintenance to reflect the higher use of these sites. This is consistent with the City of Casey Open Space Strategy Core Service Level Standards.

See Appendix 1 for the City of Casey's Framework for the Provision of Dog Friendly Spaces.

6. Administrative Updates

From time to time circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be by resolution of Council.

7. Review

The next review of this document is scheduled for completion by 30 October 2021.

Appendix 1

City of Casey's Framework for the Provision of Dog Friendly Spaces

Local Area Provision

- Provide 1-2 Dog Friendly Spaces in or adjacent to, each of Casey's Urban Local Areas.
- Plan and advocate for Dog Friendly Spaces in a similar ratio in Casey's Growth Area.



Where in each Local Area?

Large District Level Open Spaces, which function as:

- Social Family Recreation Parks;
- Large waterway and easement corridors; or
- Sports reserves with large passive open space



Site Evaluation Criteria

- Approximately 2 hectare open space to allow for a suitably sized dog friendly space of 0.5 hectare
- Where possible adjacent to an open space corridor



Proposed Dog Friendly Spaces

