



Item 7.3 Petition - Requesting Kirrip Park, South Melbourne become an 'off-leash' dog park after 5PM on weekdays and anytime during the weekend and/or public holidays.

A Change.org Petition containing 417 signatures, was received from local residents.

The Petition states the following: -

We submit this petition to request Kirrip Park, South Melbourne become an 'off-leash' dog park after 5PM on weekdays and anytime during the weekend and/or public holidays.

We provide the following reasons in support of our petition.

- 1. The increasing number of high density living around the area with new buildings will provide dogs and their parents socialisation opportunities which benefit dogs with learning appropriate behaviour and will increase their ability to live in high density situations.*
- 2. As Melbourne is increasing in high density living (with two new buildings being built in the vicinity & three more to follow across the road) a proactive approach to a dog park would be appropriate and allow the increasing number of residents access to a shared space within walking distance of their home. This supports the councils plan to reduce our carbon footprint by reducing the need to drive to the nearest dog park.*
- 3. The dogs that currently socialise at the park are mainly small oodles who respect picnickers, fitness enthusiasts and children. Some visitors to the park specifically come to the park to interact with the dogs.*
- 4. The park is always maintained to a high standard and all dog parents are responsible by cleaning up after ourselves.*
- 5. The current small cohort of dogs that socialise at Kirrip Park are missing interacting with their friends. The majority of dogs have known each other from 4 months of age and are being depressed by not being able to go to the park.*
- 6. There are no aggressive dogs that attend the park and the young puppies that attend learn to socialise and be socially responsible teenage and adult dogs.*

We understand and respect that the school has priority to use the park during school hours and for after school activities. We ask you to consider allowing the park to be a shared space for all citizens of your municipality.

We invite the council to watch the dogs interact and the respect and space provided by all who share the park.

OFFICER COMMENT

Kirrip Park

Kirrip Park is a newly established park, providing open space for a key part of the Ferrers Street Education and Community Precinct.

The dog off leash area in closest proximity to Kirrip Park is located approximately 500m away, at Station Street, Port Melbourne and extends along the rail trail through to Graham Street, Port Melbourne. The next closest designated dogs off leash areas to Kirrip Park are JL Murphy Reserve to the west and Eastern Reserve to the south east.



Designating Dog Off Leash Areas

Council can make an order by resolution imposing conditions on the presence of dogs in any public place of the municipality, including off leash areas and times, pursuant to Section 26 (2) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

Council's current Order No. (3) designates areas and restrictions currently gazetted as dogs off leash areas. These are shown on the attached map.

In order to amend an Order and change the restrictions for an area, Council must undertake community consultation to ensure a fair and balanced decision-making process for all users of the space.

An Order made by the Council pursuant to S.26 (2) of the Act must also be published in the Government Gazette and local newspaper.

Dog off leash Area in Fisherman's Bend

Recent residential development in Fisherman's Bend has created a need for access to open spaces and dog walking areas. Additionally, the number of registered dogs in the South Melbourne and Southbank area has increased slightly over the past two years, from 826 in 2018/19 to 859 in 2020/21.

Council's Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) outlines the services, programs and policies Council has established to address the management of dogs (and cats) within the municipality.

Action 18 of the DAMP is to "Explore opportunity to provide a dog off leash area in Fisherman's Bend." This action is scheduled to be completed in 2021.

It is proposed to undertake a site-specific review of Kirrip Park to identify its suitability as a new potential dog off leash area in 2021, as well as exploring other opportunities within Fishermans Bend precinct.

This work, including the community consultation and subsequent reporting, typically takes six months. The work will require a budget of \$10,000 to cover consultation costs and administration.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the Petition.
2. Acknowledges the important role that pets play in people's lives.
3. Notes that a site-specific review of Kirrip Park as a potential dog off leash area will be undertaken in 2021 and that a report will be submitted to Council following completion of the review process.

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ATTACHMENTS 1. CoPP dog off leash Parks & Reserves Map