



**10.2 ALMA PARK WEST BOUNDARY TREATMENT – RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF MOTION**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER: ALLISON KENWOOD, GENERAL MANAGER, COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND INCLUSION**

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**1. PURPOSE**

1.1 To seek Councillors approval for the inclusion of a boundary treatment to address safety of children and dogs leaving Alma Park West via Alma Park Road.

**2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

2.1 Council have received a number of community notifications regarding safety concerns for both children and dogs leaving Alma Park West at the Alma Road end of the park.

2.2 A [notice of motion](#) was received from Cr Tim Baxter on 15 March 2023.

2.3 The resolution requested Officers:

Investigate and prepare a report on a range of boundary treatment options for Alma Park West to improve safety of children and dogs leaving the park at Alma Road. Specifically options to include barriers created by:

- Greening (trees, garden beds, vegetation)
- And/or fencing.

2.4 Officers have considered potential options for Councillors consideration.

2.5 The options for the project include:

- Option 1: Fence the Alma Road boundary (Cost: \$100,000)
- Option 2: Plant vegetation to create barrier (Cost: \$120,000)
- Option 3: Leave as is

2.6 Officers recommend progressing with Option 2, planting vegetation to create a barrier. This will create an undefined visually appealing barrier to mitigate risks of incidents between dogs and motorists along Alma Road.

**3. RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

- 3.1 Endorses Option 2 to Plant vegetation to create a barrier to improve the safety of children and dogs leaving the park at Alma Road
- 3.2 Approves additional funding of \$120,000 in 2023/24 financial year budget.

#### 4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

##### Background

- 4.1 Alma Park is bordered by Alma Road, Westbury Street and Dandenong Road in St Kilda East.
- 4.2 The park has open access from each street frontage.
- 4.3 Alma Park features a play space, sports oval in the eastern section and dogs off leash area, as outlined below in Image 1:



*Image 1: Dog off leash areas within Alma Park*

- 4.4 Alma Park West is a designated dogs off leash area and Alma Park East is a dogs off leash area only north of the sports oval. Dogs are not permitted within five metres of the playground and BBQ or picnic areas.

##### **Notice of Motion**

- 4.5 There have been safety concerns raised by the community for both children and dogs leaving Alma Park West at the Alma Road end of the park.



*Image 2: Alma Park West – Area of safety concern*

- 4.6 A [notice of motion](#) was received from Cr Tim Baxter on 15 March 2023. The resolution requested Officers:

*Investigate and prepare a report on a range of boundary treatment options for Alma Park West to improve safety of children and dogs leaving the park at Alma Road. Specifically options to include barriers created by:*

- *Greening (trees, garden beds, vegetation)*
- *And/or fencing.*

**Options**

- 4.7 Officers have considered various options and potential solutions to act as a barrier for the Alma Road end of Alma Park.
- 4.8 Alma Park is crown land with City of Port Phillip as committee of management. Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) - Crown Consent will be required. Current approval timelines are approx. 6 months.
- 4.9 Any works completed on the site will also need to be undertaken in accordance with Heritage advice as the site is within a Heritage overlay.

**Option 1: Fence the Alma Road boundary (Cost: \$100,000)**

- 4.10 Fence approximately 200 lineal metres along Alma Road boundary as outlined below in Image 3:



*Image 3: Proposed Boundary Fencing - Alma Road*

- 4.11 Further investigation would be required to ascertain the contamination level for the site. Category C soil is assumed.
- 4.12 An analysis of the pros and cons for this option is listed below:

<b>PROS</b>	<b>CONS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>IMPROVES SAFETY BY CREATING AN IMMEDIATE BARRIER AND REDUCES THE RISK TO SAFETY FOR CHILDREN AND DOGS LEAVING THE PARK.</b></li> <li>○ <b>COMMUNITY SATISFACTION</b></li> <li>○ <b>CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (CPTED) – ENSURING ANY LANDSCAPING ELEMENTS DISCOURAGE CRIME.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Council funding of \$100,000 will be required to deliver these works.</li> <li>○ Could be visually unappealing</li> <li>○ Fences create an aesthetic impact that can be at odds with the idea of open space.</li> <li>○ Asset life cycle is approx. 20 years and will require annual maintenance.</li> <li>○ Fences can encourage carers and dog owners to take less</li> </ul>

	<p>responsibility for the supervision of children and dogs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o DEECA Crown Consent will be required (approx. 6 months to obtain).</li> </ul>
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**Option 2: Plant vegetation to create barrier (Cost: 120,000)**

4.13 Create an undefined boundary along Alma Road, as outlined in Image 4 below, that includes:

- o Raised garden beds and irrigation
- o Interspersed boulders
- o 1.2m shrubs and irrigation



*Image 4: Proposed Boundary vegetation - Alma Road*

4.14 An analysis of the pros and cons for this option is listed below:

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <b>VISUALLY APPEALING AND PLANTING WOULD BE IN LINE WITH THE CURRENT 'LOOK AND FEEL' OF THE RESERVE.</b></li> <li>o <b>DESIGN OF GARDEN BEDS CAN BE SYMPATHETIC TO SIGHT LINES AND VISIBILITY REQUIRED BY CAREGIVERS/PARENTS AND DOG OWNERS.</b></li> <li>o <b>CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (CPTED) – ENSURING ANY LANDSCAPING ELEMENTS DISCOURAGE CRIME.</b></li> <li>o <b>ONGOING MAINTENANCE COSTS ARE LOW.</b></li> <li>o <b>COMMUNITY SATISFACTION</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Council funding of \$120,000 will be required to deliver these works.</li> <li>o Planting vegetation can promote areas for children to play in, reducing line of sight for parents and caregivers.</li> <li>o This landscaping could encourage carers and dog owners to take less responsibility for the supervision of children and dogs.</li> <li>o DEECA Crown Consent will be required (approx. 6 months to obtain).</li> </ul>



**Option 3: Leave as is**

4.15 Council would leave this area as is and promote responsible dog ownership, ensuring their dogs are under effective control, whether on or off lead.

4.16 An analysis of the pros and cons for this option is listed below:

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>NO COST TO COUNCIL TO COMPLETE ANY WORKS.</b></li> <li>○ <b>AREA IS LEFT AS PASSIVE OPEN SPACE.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Risks levels would remain the same.</li> <li>○ Ongoing community concerns.</li> </ul>

**Recommendation**

4.17 It is recommended to progress with Option 2 - Plant vegetation to create barrier. This will create an undefined visually appealing barrier to mitigate risks of incidents between dogs and motorists along Alma Road boundary.

**5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS**

5.1 If Councillors endorse progressing with Officers recommendation, the community will be engaged prior to construction commencement.

**6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Implementing a border treatment at Alma Park would improve the safety and lower the risk of the interface between park and road.

**7. FINANCIAL IMPACT**

7.1 Council funding of \$120,000 will be required to deliver Officers recommend option, Plant vegetation to create barrier.

7.2 The project will take over six months to deliver, therefore the funding would be required in the 23/24 financial year budget.

**8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

8.1 Officers recommend option to plant vegetation to create barrier will enhance biodiversity by way of increased shrub and groundcover species in the park, attracting native species including bird and insect attracting varieties.

**9. COMMUNITY IMPACT**

9.1 There are ongoing safety concerns with the current Alma Road boundary to Alma Park which poses a risk to community health and safety.

9.2 Following the implementation of Option 2, the safety concerns of the community should be immediately alleviated.

**10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY**

10.1 **Liveable Port Phillip:** A City that is a great place to live, where our community has access to high quality public spaces, development and growth are well-managed, and it is safer and easy to connect and travel within



**11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

11.1 Subject to Council's decision, officers will progress this project to the following timeline:

11.2 TIMELINE

**September 2023** – Commence design for project

**October/November 2023** – Procure construction contractor

**February 2024** – Commence construction

11.3 COMMUNICATION

**October 2023** – Engage community

**12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST**

12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

**ATTACHMENTS** Nil