DRAFT DOGS IN OPEN SPACE PLAN



Appendix A

DOG OFF-LEASH PROVISION METHODOLOGY

HUME CITY COUNCIL

Dog Off-leash Provision Methodology

The following pages detail the tools applied in the process shown below.

Stage	Relevant Tools	
Planning and Analysis 1. Determine need – Is there a need for additional off-leash areas in this part of Hume? **Tool A** 2. Determine capacity - Does a potential site exist? **Tool B** 3. Determine site feasibility – Has the site met its evaluation criteria? **Tool C** 4. Determine if/any appropriate sites = Draft Plan recommendations	**Tool A** **Tool B** **Tool C**	**Apply Guiding Principles throughout**
Community Engagement 5. Seek community feedback via Draft Dogs in Open Space Plan - Is there community support? 6. Review feedback, revise document 7. Council approval of final Dogs in Open Space Plan		
Delivery and ongoing management 8. Gazettal and Signage 9. Upgrades for new Infrastructure Levels of Service – **Tool D** 10. Ongoing: site maintenance and local laws compliance	**Tool D**	

Tool A: Determining Need

A1. Test provision against Guiding Principles to determine any gaps (Principle 4)

Assess the spatial network for:

- Off-leash areas within 1500 metres walking distance of most residential properties under 4000m²
- Fenced off-leash areas within 10 minutes' drive of most residential properties under 4000m²

The maps in Appendix D enable assessment and determination of gaps in the network of off-leash areas.

A2. Masterplan Guidance

- Is an off-leash area a recommendation of an endorsed masterplan?
- Is a masterplan review scheduled in the next 3 years? If so, await this process for further analysis

A3. Does the site have sports fields?

- If so, determine field/s construction and usage levels to understand compatibility with off-leash use.
- Where suitable, sports fields will be made available for off-leash use
- If not, progress to tool B



Tool B: Determining Capacity

B1. Can Council service an additional off-leash site?

(Principle 3)

- Maintenance implications and capacity – Parks team
- Monitoring and enforcement implications and capacity – Local Laws team

B2. Is a reserve available that can support and OLA/FOLA?

The Open Space Strategy 2025: Infrastructure Levels of Service permit off-leash areas in open space as follows:

Function	Regional	District	Neighbour-hood	Local
Social Recreation	OO	O	X	X
Sport	OO	O	O	X
Conservation & Cultural Values	O	X	X	X
Tree Reserves	NA	NA	O	X
Urban and Civic	X	X	X	X
Linear Links and Trails	O	O	O	X
Drainage	O	O	O	X
Ancillary	O	O	O	O

X Should not have O May have OO Should have



Tool C: Determining Site Suitability

Tool C - Site Evaluation Criteria	
C1 Primary Evaluation criteria	
1	Sufficient space to accommodate an off-leash area without impacting existing or planned park uses, including:
	· capacity to accommodate off-leash activity – minimum 100x50m, preferred 15,000m²
	· potential impacts on other park uses, in particular picnic and childrens' play areas
	· ability to provide safe 10m buffers from other activities and traffic, cycling and pedestrian paths
	· scope to reconfigure or relocate activities to enable off-leash use.
2	N o environmental constraints, considering:
	· impacts on cultural or environmental areas (e.g., wetlands, wildlife habitat) and mitigation options
	· impacts on adjoining land uses and how they can be managed (e.g., residential, schools)
	· previous land uses that may preclude off-leash activity (e.g., former landfill)
3	Overall site appeal and usability include:
	· ease of monitoring and visibility across activity zones
	· site isolation, surrounding uses, and opportunities for casual surveillance
	· capacity to meet diverse user needs, including accessible parking.
4	Site access, and any use restrictions (e.g., time of day limits, scheduled sports use).
5	Access to facilities (e.g., parking, toilets, picnic areas, shelters).

C2 Secondary evaluation criteria	
6	Ability to integrate the off-leash area with other park activities (e.g. visual connection to play, sports and picnic areas).
7	Access to natural features, including:
	· diverse dog environments (e.g. sensory and rock clamber zones)
	· pleasant natural settings and natural shade.
8	Access via safe, off road shared paths and footpaths providing direct routes.
9	Site readiness for short term implementation and related constraints including:
	· new reserves, former landfill remediation
	· the need to prepare a master plan
	· negotiating access and conditions with another landowner
C3 Additional evaluation consideration	
10	Whether the site is already used for off-leash activity (formal or informal), which may indicate community acceptance (confirmation through consultation still required).

Tool D: Design and Delivery

D1. Infrastructure Levels of Service									
Infrastructure	**Neighbourhood**			**District**			**Regional**		
	Fenced	**Unfenced**	**On-leash**	**Fenced**	**Unfenced**	**On-leash**	**Fenced**	**Unfenced**	**On-leash**
Car Parking – Sealed (permeable or passively irrigating adjacent areas)	O	O	O	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO
Drinking fountain/Tap – Dogs (away from FOLA entry points)	OOO	OOO	O	OOO	OOO	OO	OOO	OOO	OO
Drinking fountain/Tap – People (away from FOLA entry points)	OOO	OOO	O	OOO	OOO	OO	OOO	OOO	OO
Education/Agility Equipment - Dogs	OO	O	X	OO	O	X	O	X	X
Fencing/Bollards (outside FOLA)	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Fencing – non-FOLA barrier (other activities, road safety, sensitive areas)	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Garden Beds	OO	O	O	OO	O	O	OO	O	O
Lighting	X	O	O	X	O	O	O	O	O
Litter Bag Dispensers – Dogs (outside FOLA)	OOO	OOO	O	OOO	OOO	O	OOO	OOO	O
Open run about area - Dogs	OOO	OOO	O	OOO	OOO	O	OOO	OOO	O
Paths – Shared – Pedestrian and Cycle – 2.5-3.0m (outside FOLA)	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO
Paths – Primary – Pedestrian 2.0m	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO
Paths – Secondary – Pedestrian 1.5m	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO	OO
Public litter bins (outside OLA)	OOO	OO	O	OOO	OO	OO	OOO	OOO	OO
Public Toilet (min. two cubicles – outside FOLA)	O	O	O	OO	O	O	OO	OO	O
Rock Rummaging Area - Dogs	O	X	X	OO	O	X	OOO	O	O

Infrastructure	Neighbourhood			District			Regional		
	Fenced	Unfenced	On-leash	Fenced	Unfenced	On-leash	Fenced	Unfenced	On-leash
Seating – chair with back and arms, bench, seats, other (minimum one bench to encourage 360-degree supervision)	OOO	OOO	OO	OOO	OOO	OO	OOO	OOO	OO
Seating - Picnic settings (outside FOLA)	OO	OO	O	OO	OO	O	OOO	OO	OO
Sensory environment - Dogs	O	X	X	OO	O	X	OOO	O	O
Shelter (locate away from FOLA entry points)	O	O	O	OO	OO	O	OOO	OO	O
Signage – rules and regulations (at entry points) – refer to guidelines for details	OOO	OOO	O	OOO	OOO	O	OOO	OOO	O
Sports – Field (outside FOLA)	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Tree Canopy	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO
Enclosures – Dogs **(Locate activity away from entries)**	**O**	**X**	**X**	**O**	**X**	**X**	**O**	**X**	**X**
• Single Area	O	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X
• Small Dog Area	O	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X
• Time out Area	O	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X
• Training Area	O	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X
• Double Gated Entry/Exit (minimum 2)	OOO	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X
• Maintenance gate	OOO	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X
• FOLA Fencing (1.2m high – no right angles)	OOO	X	X	OOO	X	X	OOO	X	X
• Approach Pathways	OOO	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X
• Internal Pathways	OOO	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X
• Textured Pathways (for confidence development)	O	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X

Tool D: Design and Delivery

D2. Landscape Design Guidelines	
These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Infrastructure Levels of Service above. Standard details of some elements will be developed by Council's Landscape Planning team.	
Accessibility	Infrastructure should be designed to be easily accessible for people with mobility limitations.
Area	minimum dimensions of main area 100x50m, preferred 15,000m². Additional spaces (eg. for small dogs) addi-tional minimum 50x50m
Fencing	Purpose: Where necessary, to provide a barrier to stop dogs running beyond the off-leash area. Fences are not intended to stop dogs that may jump fences; these dogs should not be off-leash.
	Alternative barriers to hazards, such as landscape mounding and/or partial fencing, should be considered before full fencing
	Height: 900-1200mm
	Fencing should meet the ground to prevent digging.
	Corners: Avoid right angle corners, as dogs and people can become trapped and anxious.
Entries	• Keep entry areas clear of bins, seating, shelters and equipment to reduce congestion.
	• Entries should be accessible wherever possible
	FOLA:
	• All external entries must be double gated, positioned on and outside straight fence sections to avoid trapping points.
	• Single gates may be used for internal FOLA zones (e.g., small dog area).
	Latches must be xxx , and placed at an accessible height for wheelchairs.

Under surfacing	Different surface types help dogs build confidence through varied tactile experiences and improve the park's function. Appropriate surfacing reduces maintenance, prevents dust and mud in high traffic areas, improves accessibility, particularly around shelters and enhances the park's overall appearance. Surface treatments are essential in high wear locations such as entries and exits, around seating and shelters, under trees, and near obstacles. Non grass surfaces like granitic sand or mulch are recommended in these areas. Surface options: • Entries/exits: Use granitic sand and/or concrete with good drainage; extend surfacing beyond the gate area to prevent erosion. • Seating and shelters: Use granitic sand; avoid concrete edges that create trip hazards. • Obstacles (logs, rock mounds): Use granitic sand between rocks to prevent entrapment; use mulch around outcrops for texture variety. • Water stations: Install drainage and use concrete or grass blocks to avoid mud and dust. • Sporting oval surfaces will typically be provided in accordance with sporting functional requirements. Provide smooth transitions between surface types
Seating	• Locate seats and other furniture away from entrances to avoid congestion
	• Provide at least one seat with backrests and preferably armrests
	• Single benches support supervision in multiple directions
	Seating may not be provided at ovals where sporting code compliance will take priority.
Bins	Provide bins at:
	• main entrances to reserves and ovals
	• FOLA entrances
	• Multiple points around ovals where feasible
	Ensure bins can be accessed from within fenced off-leash areas .

Tool D: Design and Delivery

Bag dispensers	Dog litter bag dispensers do not remove the requirement for dog owners to carry a receptacle for dog waste at all times. Dispensers will be provided at • All off-leash areas • Popular on-leash areas
Shade	• Structures should maximise sun and weather protection and support social use
	• Include accessible seating and be wheelchair friendly
	Ensure natural shade areas have accessible surfacing where possible.
Water	• Drinking fountains must be accessible for people with limited mobility
	• Dog bowls will be provided on drinking fountains where they are located in an appropriate setting.
	• Dog watering locations require drainage and stable, low-maintenance surfacing
Pathways	• Provide accessible surfacing to allow people with restricted mobility to reach all areas.
	• Avoid approach paths running along the fence; if unavoidable, add low vegetation outside the fence to re-duce congestion and fence running.
	• Internal paths should support accessibility, define zones, and help teach dogs footpath etiquette.
	Use low plantings between the fence and nearby external paths to reduce barking and fence running.
Agility and other equipment	High agility equipment can be an injury risk when used improperly and is not supported. Tunnels may be provided with suitable drainage and wear management. Carefully placed rocks and logs create good sensory and exploratory spaces.
Prohibited areas	Signage at all entrances.

Signage	Signage form and content is to be in accordance with the Hume Signage Style Guide (pp57-60) Use internationally recognizable symbols over language where space is limited.
	Locations:
	Off-leash Signage
	Totem signage or flat plate signage
	• Major park entrances
	• Fenced off-leash area entries
	Pole signage
	• Secondary and minor park entrances
	• Where controls change within a park
	Decals, when surfaces permit:
	• Compliance problem areas
	• High use areas
	• Where controls change along paths
	On-leash signage
	• in designated on-leash areas where required:
	• Where the reserve connects to a shared path
	• Where a playspace is in proximity to a dog off-leash area
	• On major linkages and trails.
	Within designated off-leash areas where required:
	• car park or roadway
	• outdoor exercise equipment
	• formal picnic facilities including public BBQ facilities or picnic shelter

Tool D: Design and Delivery

Signage continued...	• formal sporting competition or training event
	• a trail
	• school or preschool
	• wetland and or water body
	• market or community event
	• playspace, BMX/skate facility, or similar facility.
	Dogs Prohibited Area signage
	• Signage at all entrances.
Drainage	Required to minimise wet areas, compaction issues and associated maintenance..

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