

Feedback Summary Report: Dog-friendly features at Whitehaven Crescent Reserve

Executive Summary

The Feedback Summary Report has been compiled after community engagement on the proposed dog-friendly features at Whitehaven Crescent Reserve.

We received 15 responses via Shape Monash and one submission from the Friends of Whitehaven Community group.

Key findings

Respondents were asked whether they liked or disliked the draft concept plan and which dog-friendly features they would like to see at the reserve.

The majority of participants loved or liked the draft concept plan.

When asked what their favourite elements were on the draft concept plan, the majority of respondents selected timber logs, seating and paws table, with mudstone/granite boulders, timber stepping logs and A-frames being the next most popular options.

Qualitative analysis was conducted with four themes identified:

- **Safety and dog management:** Requests for fencing near playgrounds and residential areas to manage unleashed dogs and improve safety.
- **Infrastructure and amenities:** Strong support for shade through tree planting and shelters. Requests for picnic tables, BBQs, drinking stations, agility equipment and more bins to improve comfort and usability.
- **Accessibility and inclusion:** Suggestions for walking paths and easier access for older adults and people with mobility challenges.
- **Design sensitivity and biodiversity:** Mixed views on adding new features versus preserving the park's quiet, natural feel. Interest in biodiversity enhancements like ponds and edible plants.

Next steps

We will use the key findings to finalise the detailed design and establish construction start date.

Background

As part of Monash's ongoing commitment to providing quality parks and open spaces for the community, we consulted with local residents, park users and other stakeholders on installing dog-friendly features and landscape enhancements to the dog off-leash area at Whitehaven Crescent Reserve in Mulgrave. The purpose of this consultation was to gather feedback to help inform and refine the concept design based on community needs and preferences.

How we engaged

The consultation period ran from Monday 4 August to Sunday 31 August 2025. A range of engagement opportunities and promotional activities were implemented to ensure broad awareness and encourage participation.

How we promoted the engagement

We informed the community via:

- **Shape Monash – email campaign:** Targeted emails sent to subscribers and stakeholders to promote the consultation and invite input.
- **Social media promotion:** Posts across Monash Council's social media channels to reach a wider audience and encourage engagement.
- **Flyer distribution to local residents:** Direct mail to households within a 400m radius of Whitehaven Crescent Reserve to ensure nearby residents were aware of the project and had the opportunity to provide feedback.
- **Onsite corflute signs:** Informational signage placed within Whitehaven Crescent Reserve to alert park users to the consultation and direct them to engagement opportunities.

Engagement activities

- **Shape Monash survey – [Dog friendly features at Whitehaven Crescent Reserve](#):** Survey for community members to share their feedback on the project.

Feedback

Who we heard from

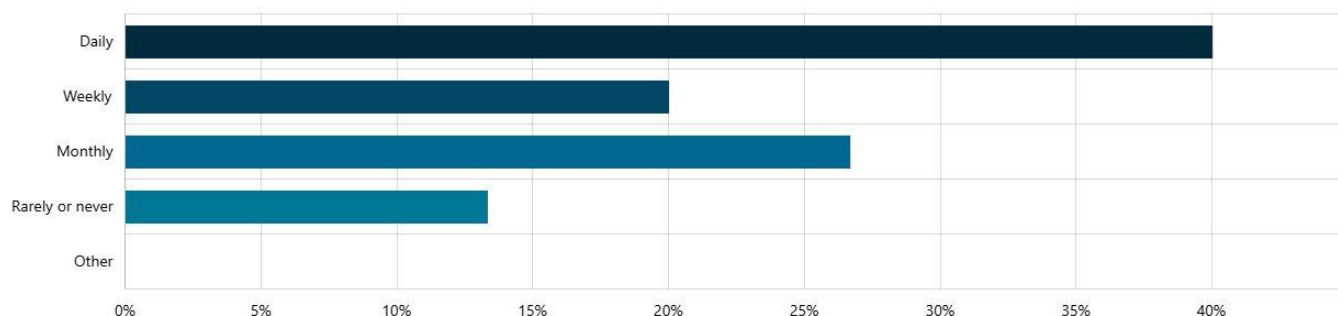
15 respondents completed the online survey on Shape Monash.

In total there were 212 visits to the page and two opted to follow the project.

When asked about the respondent's connections to the reserve:

- Eight were dog owners and used the reserve to walk their dog(s)
- Seven were interested residents
- Six were involved with a local community group, the Friends of Whitehaven group
- Five used the reserve for other recreational and social activities
- Four were dog owners but did not use the reserve.

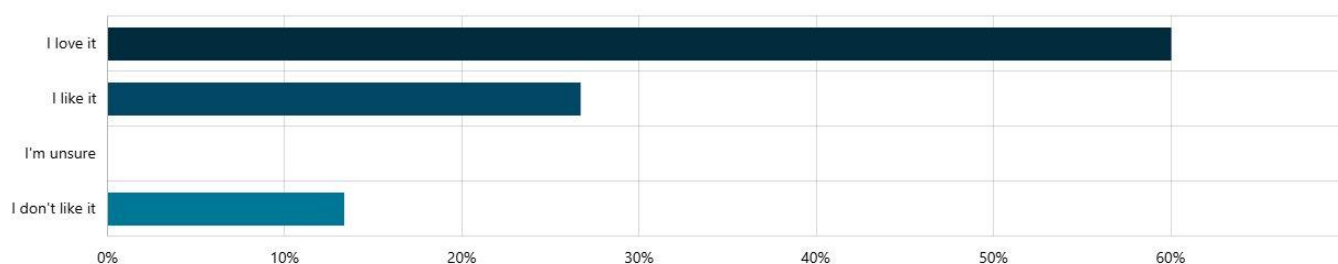
When asked how frequently they visit the reserve, the largest proportion of respondents reported visiting daily (40%), with 27% responding monthly.



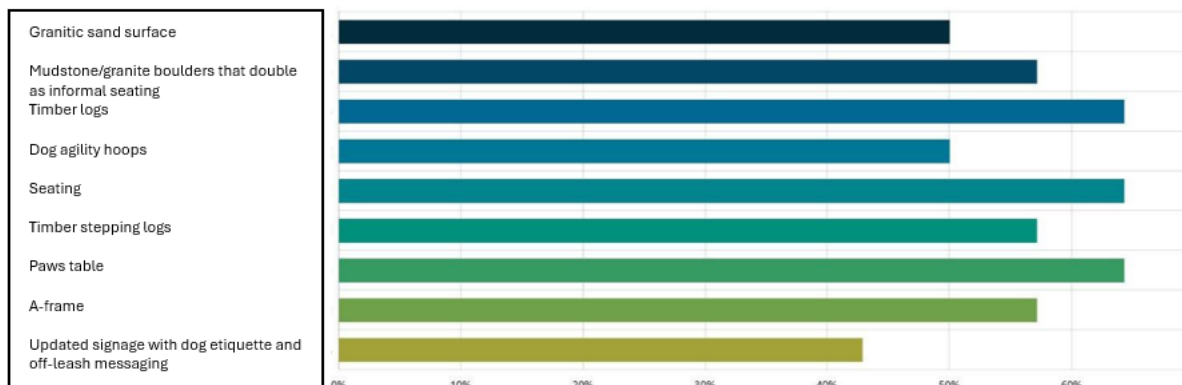
What we heard from the community

We asked a variety of questions to capture community thoughts and opinions on what dog-friendly features they wanted at the reserve.

A draft concept plan was shared with respondents, which included dog-friendly infrastructure and agility elements. When asked how community members felt about the plan, the majority liked and loved the plan.



When asked what respondents' favourite elements were on the draft concept plan, 14 responses were recorded with respondents choosing as many options as they preferred. The majority of respondents selected timber logs, seating and paws table, with mudstone/granite boulders (that double as informal seating), timber stepping logs and A-frames the next most popular options.



Friends of Whitehaven Group Submission

Additionally, we received a submission from the Friends of Whitehaven community group, who are strongly committed to preserving the reserve. Their proposal outlines thoughtful strategies to optimise the space's use while maintaining its natural garden character.

The group's key vision is to create a vibrant, inclusive community space through:

- Enriched play areas
- Dog-friendly zones
- Appealing garden and natural spaces
- Connected walking paths.

The Friends of Whitehaven group proposed measures to ensure safe and enjoyable use of the reserve, including:

- Clear separation between dog and children's areas using buffer zones, signage, and potential playground fencing.
- Zoning for small and large dogs to reduce conflict and encourage enriched play.
- Improved drainage through dry creek beds and swale maintenance to address seasonal bogging.
- Design strategies to discourage anti-social behaviour by avoiding hidden or secluded areas.

The Friends of Whitehaven group has actively contributed to the reserve's upkeep since 2021, hosting biannual working bees. They aim to expand their role in park maintenance and foster greater community involvement.

Key findings

Respondents were provided opportunities to share their feedback on why they liked or disliked the draft concept plan and additional feedback on the draft concept plan. Responses were analysed and categorised into 4 key themes.

Theme	Community Feedback Summary	Council Response Summary
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Safety and dog Management	Requests for partial and full fencing near playgrounds. Concerns about unleashed dogs and proximity to residential areas.	Signage will be installed to help educate residents on responsible dog ownership and supervision. Community laws will support safe use of public spaces. Fences are generally not provided for upgrades to dog off-leash areas, particularly in locations with high traffic or safety risks. Refer to page 9 of the Monash Dog Off-Leash Policy.
Infrastructure and amenities	Strong support for tree planting and shelters to improve comfort in hot or wet weather. Requests for picnic tables and barbecues to make the park more family-friendly. Requests for additional drinking stations, agility equipment (e.g. tunnels, weaving poles), and enrichment features. Need for more bins and concerns about dog waste and general upkeep.	We'll keep the tree plantings in the concept design to reflect your support for the planting and the need for shade. This also helps increase tree canopy cover and aligns with our Environmental and Sustainability Strategy. We will consider other agility equipment options in line with the project's budget, along with the elements in the concept you told us were your favourites. We appreciate how much you value having access to the existing drinking fountain with dog bowl and the proposed dog waste dispenser. For dog off-leash areas like Whitehaven, our standard is to provide 1 bin and dog waste dispenser at the site. We will keep monitoring how these features are used after the project to see if the park's needs change in the future. Unfortunately, requests for the shelter, picnic tables, BBQ and relocating the drinking fountain fall outside of the project's budget or site constraints.
Accessibility & Inclusion	Suggestions for walking paths and easier access for older residents and those with mobility challenges.	Unfortunately, designing and constructing a new path falls outside the budget available for this project. We will consider these suggestions if there are other funded upgrades to this reserve in future.
Design Sensitivity & Biodiversity	Mixed views on adding features versus preserving the park's quiet, natural character.	We aim to balance activation with preservation in our design approach—avoiding overdevelopment while enhancing the space through subtle improvements such as tree planting. These additions support biodiversity and maintain open, tranquil areas for recreation.

	Requests for biodiversity features (e.g. pond, edible plants).	While Council supports biodiversity goals, larger features suggested fall outside the scope and budget of this project. These enhancements will be considered in future upgrades, in line with the park's classification as a local reserve. We aim to balance activation with preservation. The design avoids overdevelopment and focuses on subtle improvements like tree planting to enhance biodiversity while maintaining open, tranquil spaces for varied recreational use. Council supports biodiversity goals, however the larger features suggested fall outside the budget of this project. Larger enhancements will be considered in future upgrades, aligned with the park's classification as a local reserve. Refer to the Monash Open Space Strategy (MOSS) for more information on this classification.
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Next steps

Thank you to everyone who shared their feedback. This will be used by the project team to install the features in line with the project's budget and scope. Project timelines will be determined shortly with the aim to have the project completed by June 2026.

We will share this report and updates on the project via the Shape Monash project page: <https://shape.monash.vic.gov.au/whitehaven-crescent-ola>