

Feedback Summary Report: Dog-friendly features at Jack Edwards Reserve

Executive Summary

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

We received 42 responses via Shape Monash and heard from approximately 20 people at the community drop-in sessions.

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 survey respondents wanted repairs to existing gates and the boundary fence, and new bins with dog bag dispensers. Upgrade and relocation of the drinking fountain and dog bowl was the next most popular option, followed by timber logs, then and pathways throughout the off-leash area.

Qualitative analysis was conducted with four themes identified from the survey:

Key focus areas for improvements

- **Enhanced safety measures:** Including separate zones for different dog sizes, secure entry systems, and protective barriers.
- **Upgraded infrastructure and amenities:** Such as new agility equipment, better turf and irrigation, improved lighting, more seating, shelters, bins, and drinking stations.
- **Improved accessibility and usability:** Through formalised paths and consideration of alternative spaces during park closures.
- **Clearer communication channels:** Establishing a dedicated contact point for reporting maintenance issues and sharing feedback with council.

Next steps

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

Background

Jack Edwards Reserve is an open space area in Oakleigh with sportsgrounds, pavilions and a dog off-leash area. 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 tenants, and other stakeholders on installing dog-friendly features and landscape enhancements to the dog off-leash area at the reserve. 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 and promotion of the two community drop-in sessions.
- **Article in the Monash Bulletin:** Informing residents about the proposed upgrades and how to get involved.
- **Letter/flyer distribution to local residents:** Direct mail to households within a 400m radius of Jack Edwards Reserve to ensure nearby residents were aware of the project and had the opportunity to provide feedback.
- **Onsite corflute signs:** Informational signage placed within Jack Edwards Reserve to alert park users to the consultation and direct them to engagement opportunities.

Engagement activities

- **Shape Monash survey – Dog friendly features at Jack Edwards Reserve:** A survey for community members to share their feedback on the project.
- **Community drop-in sessions:** Two community drop-in sessions were held at Jack Edwards Reserve on Thursday 7 August between 11am-12pm and Saturday 16 August between 10am-11am. This provided the community a chance to speak with council officers, ask questions and share their views.

Feedback

Who we heard from

Shape Monash survey

42 respondents completed the online survey on Shape Monash.

In total, there were 533 visits to the Shape page and 12 opted to follow the project.

Of the 42 responses, there were 41 respondents. One respondent completed the survey twice, providing different feedback both times.

When asked about the respondents' connections to the reserve (respondents could select multiple responses):

- 39 respondents were dog owners – 30 used the reserve to walk their dog(s) and nine had dog(s) but were not users of the reserve.
- 11 were local residents interested in the project.
- Six use the reserve for recreational and social activities.

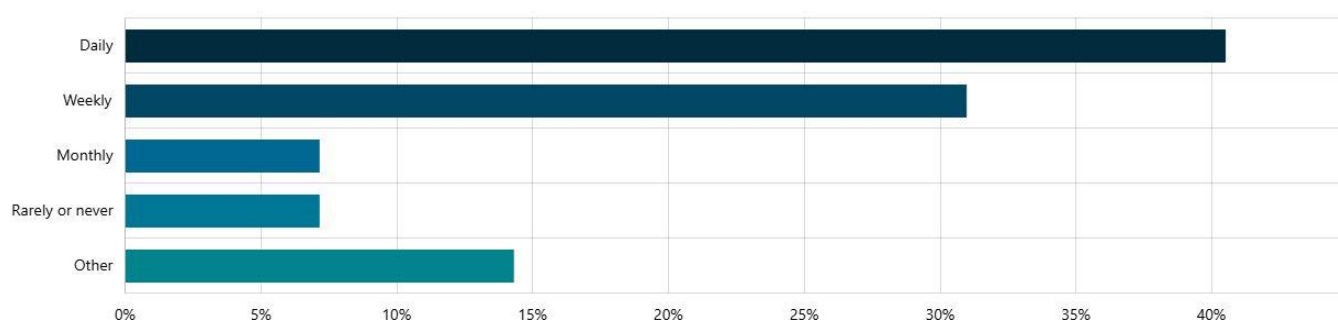
Community drop-in sessions

Council officers were onsite on Thursday 7 August and Saturday 16 August to collect feedback from community members.

Approximately 20 people provided their feedback on what their favourite elements were on the draft concept plan and shared other suggestions for equipment.

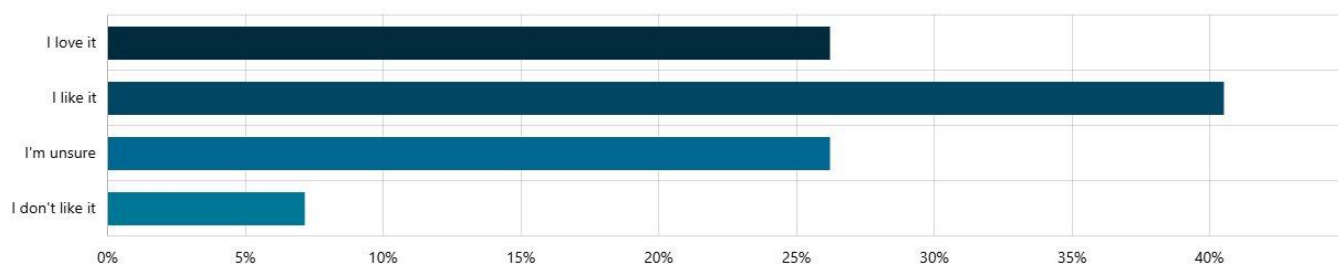
What we heard from the community

When asked about frequency of visiting the reserve, majority of survey respondents reported visiting daily (41%) and weekly (31%).

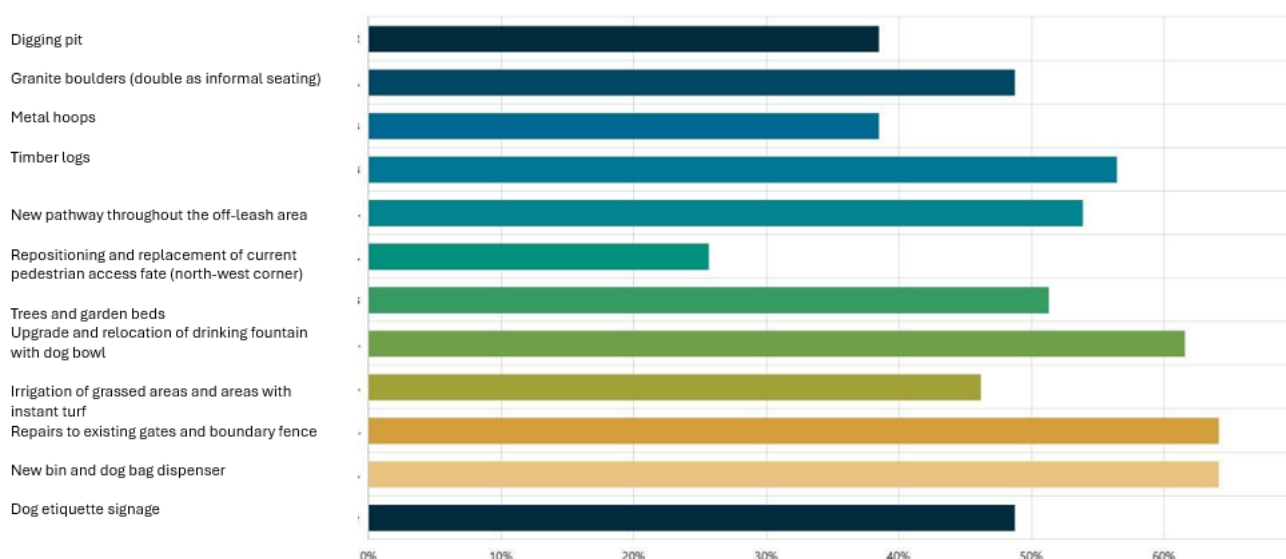


We asked a variety of questions to capture community thoughts and opinions on what dog-friendly features they wanted at the reserve.

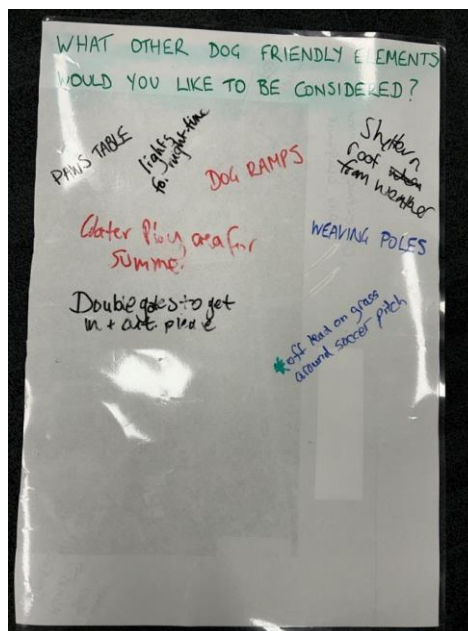
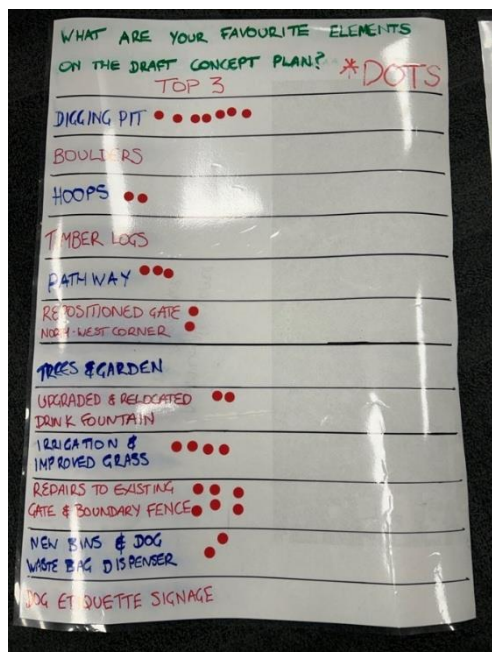
A draft concept plan was shared with respondents, with key dog-friendly infrastructure and design elements. When asked how community members felt about the plan, the majority of survey respondents liked and loved the plan.



When asked what survey respondents' favourite elements were on the draft concept plan, 39 responses were recorded with respondents choosing as many options as they preferred. The majority of survey respondents wanted repairs to existing gates and the boundary fence, and new bins with dog bag dispensers. Upgrade and relocation of the drinking fountain and dog bowl was the next most popular option, followed by timber logs, and then pathways throughout the off-leash area.



At the community drop-in sessions, the top elements chosen were a digging pit, followed by repairs to gate and fencing.



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.

The key themes and Council's responses are addressed below:

Theme	Community Feedback Summary	Council Response Summary
Safety and control	Request for self-closing gates. Concern about large dogs dominating space; suggestion for separate areas for small and large dogs. Support for double-gated entry system. Desire for protective barriers near Scout Hall.	To enhance safety, we will include self-closing gates in the design at all entries and exists within the dog off-leash area. We will also install dog etiquette signage to help educate reserve users on responsible dog ownership and supervision. While we considered double gated entries, they will not be included as they fall outside the project budget. The existing dog off-leash area meets the minimum size requirements as outlined in the Monash Dog Off-Leash Policy. Introducing additional fencing or infrastructure to divide the space into smaller zones would significantly compromise the area's design and functionality, resulting in a cluttered layout that limits usability. When we designed the pathway we focused on the one in concept design to minimise additional infrastructure and to meet the project budget. A second pathway behind the Scout Hall would fall outside the project budget. There would also be concerns about environmental sensitivity, and safety related to poor visibility when behind the Scout Hall.
Infrastructure and amenities	Urgent need for upgrades due to wear and tear of the ground. Importance of irrigation and turf enhancement. Additional ideas for agility equipment; ramps, tunnels, and training hurdles. Requests for more drinking stations.	We've listened to your feedback about the impact of heavy use on the grass, and will retain the irrigation and turf upgrades in the design. We will consider other agility equipment options in line with the project's budget, along with the elements in the design you told us were your favourites. Seats will also be included throughout the dog off-leash area so humans and pups have areas to rest. We appreciate how much you value having access to the existing drinking fountain, and will upgrade it with a drinking bowl for our canine friends. There were some requests for multiple drink stations and bins. For dog off-leash areas the size of Jack Edwards, our

	Need for increased bin availability. Suggestions for improved lighting. Desire for shelter installation. Requests for picnic tables and more seating.	standard is to provide 1 drinking fountain, and we are limited in how many extra bins we can provide due to waste collection challenges. Unfortunately requests for the shelter, lighting and picnic tables fall outside the projects scope and budget. The concept includes tree planting which will provide additional shade over the dog agility zone. This also helps to increase tree canopy cover and aligns with our Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2016-2026.
Accessibility and usability	Need for formalised paths to improve accessibility. Concerns about extended park closure and lack of alternatives.	The proposed concrete pathway will offer a safe and durable solution to improve connections through the site. Two closures will occur for this site to complete the works. This is due to contractor availability. We predict a six-month closure period in total is required for safe construction. Signs will direct users to nearby off-leash areas and provide specific site closure dates.
Communication and maintenance	Interest in a dedicated contact point for reporting maintenance issues and other concerns.	After the upgrades, we will regularly maintain and monitor the site to ensure issues such as damaged equipment or empty dog waste dispensers are attended to.

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 projects budget and scope. We predict a six-month closure period for this project to ensure safe construction. Project timelines will be determined shortly with the aim to have the project completed by October 2026.

Funding for the construction of the upgrades is funded by the state and local government.

We will share this report and updates on the project via the Shape Monash project page:

<https://shape.monash.vic.gov.au/jack-edwards-ola>