



Item 7.1 Request to access the St Kilda Peanut Farm Pavilion and oval lighting by the Dog Owners Group of St Kilda

A Petition containing 238 signatures, was received from St Kilda Dog Owners Group of St Kilda.

The Petition states the following: -

As discussed on the phone to you today I am the President of the St Kilda Dog Owners Group of St Kilda (<https://www.facebook.com/DOGSTKILDA/>)

We represent a social group of dog owners who started in the Peanut Farm Reserve in St Kilda. Approximately 360 owners regularly use the park daily, with many more joining us frequently. This group is a forum for our Dog related news and social interaction.

Our highly socialised dogs provide a safe and supportive environment for introducing new dogs and puppies, helping them become balanced and happy animals when around others. Highly socialised, trained and well balanced animals make pet ownership a joy and also improve the St Kilda and Port Phillip areas attracting increased use of dog friendly cafes and community facilities.

Our regular group of dog owners are friendly, inclusive and from a diverse background. We welcome new locals and new pet owners to join our group, happy to offer them advice, company and a few laughs during our daily walks and exercise.

We represent the concerns of many of the 7,000 dogs and their owners registered in the 21 sq km of Port Phillip area. We want to ensure the council continues to support fair access to the facilities and services currently provided for our pets.

We are growing stronger in numbers every day and now have Friday evenings 16.30 to 19.00 as a regular formalised meeting time for dogs, owners, and friends in all seasons. Dogs and their owners are present all days in large numbers mornings and evenings as well spread during the day. There would be few times when there is not a dog in the Peanut Farm Reserve.

Our expanded diverse numbers (360) have highlighted the justification for our members to be able to use all the amenities available at the Peanut Reserve. I believe presently 2 cricket clubs use the newly revamped Peanut Farm Pavilion over some summer weekend days and a football club uses the pavilion over some winter days. The Dog Owners Group of St Kilda has cooperated and worked in sharing the oval use with sporting clubs and other uses and has always given priority use to these groups at all times.

We have calculated that the Dog Owners Group of St Kilda members spend far more time (conservatively 18,250 man hours per year) on the Peanut Farm than any other group and yet have no access to the Pavilion or oval lighting at any time. This does not include dog owners who are not members but use the Peanut Farm oval.

ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL 15 JULY 2020



I request from the Shire the opportunity to use the Peanut Farm Pavilion on various occasions for group meetings and other special events and to be able to use the oval lighting on various occasions.

During the winter months, many members of the club working 9 to 5 have to exercise their dogs during night hours. The Peanut Farm is used at this time for many reasons including security for male and female members being there in number, the park is an off-leash zone and is fenced, and the park has rain shelter.

The only thing lacking is adequate lighting. This is an obvious hazard. Some dogs wear lighted collars so owners can see them. The new LED oval lights that have been installed have been turned on for various reasons while the members of the Dog Owner Group of St Kilda have been there, and the difference it makes to the overall experience is considerable. Apart from the wellbeing, the safety risks to members and dogs are dramatically reduced.

The lighting requirements of the Dog Owners Group of St Kilda during winter months would be at a maximum 2 hours starting at dusk and finishing no later than 7.30 pm. Again, this is a maximum figure and most occasions lights would be off earlier than 7.00 pm. These hours would be of little or no concern to local residents and the power costs of the LED lights would be well justified for the community benefits created.

The Dog Owners Group of St Kilda understands that the Peanut Farm oval is a shared resource and has practiced this with cooperative workings with the Cricket and Football Clubs and other public. The Dog Owners Group of St Kilda is another group that contribute and add diversity to the City of Port Phillip.

The constant presence of dog owners on the oval day and night is a deterrent to graffiti writers and other people doing undesirable things to the amenities in the area. We understand that sporting clubs using the Pavilion during matches and match training would have automatic priority use for the Pavilion.

The Committee of the Dog Owners Group of St Kilda are all senior in years, professional and responsible. The Committee overseeing the use of facilities would not delegate their responsibilities. I would make myself personally responsible and can assure you the Dog Owners Group of St Kilda would cause no concerns.

I hope my requests on the above matters get the consideration and respect it deserves as a large community group positively contributing to the Shire in many ways. Could you please put this request for the access to the Peanut Farm amenities by our group to the responsible management or Council members.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the petition and that officers provide a response at the next available Council Meeting.

TRIM FILE NO: F20/1
ATTACHMENTS: Nil