



**URGENT BUSINESS - M.O. MORAN RESERVE DOG PARK -
PROJECT OPTIONS**

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek Council approval to allocate an additional \$158,576.20 to the M.O. Moran Reserve Dog Park Project, to be funded from a drawdown on open space reserve to provide what officers believe is the best value for money option for this facility.
- 1.2 This report is urgent as Council has been the recipient of a DELWP grant in which the contribution must be expended prior to June 30, 2022 to remain eligible for the funding. Council does not sit again until February 2022 and if a decision is delayed until that meeting the project will not be delivered in time to satisfy the DWELP funding requirements.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 A new designated, fenced dog off-leash dog area in the municipality was a State Government election commitment. Dog owners seek space to let their dogs run and play without a leash. Recognising that it is important that this is done in a way that is safe for all open space users and their pets, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) offered grants of \$275,000 for eligible councils to deliver fenced dog off-leash areas.
- 2.2 Following a site and options analysis against the criteria stipulated in the DELWP grant guidelines and engagement with Councillors, it was determined that a grant application would be submitted for M.O. Moran Reserve in Elwood. Council was successful in receiving the full \$275,000 grant in late 2020 from DELWP to deliver the dog off-leash area (total project budget of \$275,000 with no Council contribution).
- 2.3 Council officers have since undertaken detailed design of the park. The design was based on best practice considerations for dog parks and their users taking into account usability, accessibility and supporting amenities. Following the design process an independent cost plan was prepared taking into consideration all items from the design. The cost plan for the full suite of items indicated an expected cost for all items of \$514,076.20 (ex GST), \$239,076.20 in addition to the fully funded DELWP grant.



- 2.4 The cost plan price received exceeds the existing allocated budget for the project. Officers have worked to re-scope the project to fall within the existing budget. The following report presents these options to Council for consideration.
- 2.5 Option one (Basic Dog Park) is the option that meets the project budget however, there are numerous exclusions from the design that are considered best practice when designing a dedicated dog park. *Budget shortfall of approx. \$18,924.*
- 2.6 Option two (Full Suite) takes into account the full suite of items that are considered necessary when designing a dedicated dog park. *Budget shortfall of approx. \$268,906*
- 2.7 Option three (Extended Dog Park) option includes all recommended design items and reduces the budget for planting and garden beds. It is expected that garden beds and planting can be reduced to assist with budget requirements. It is estimated that \$20,000 (down from \$120,000) can be budgeted for these items with minimal impact to the finished product. *Budget shortfall of approx. \$158,576.*
- 2.8 The prices received are considered to represent a true and appropriate cost to deliver the works. In order to go to tender for construction with appropriate contingency to cover potential latent conditions associated with a project of this size, it is recommended that Council proceed with option three and allocation \$158,576.20 in funding to the project, bringing the total allocated budget for this project (including spend to date) to \$433,576.20 (ex GST).

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 3.1 Approve a budget commitment for this project of \$158,576.20 (excluding GST) to provide adequate facilities for a successful dog park with funding from open space reserve.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

- 4.1 The City of Port Phillip only has one formal existing fenced dog off-leash area, in Eastern Reserve in South Melbourne.
- 4.2 The proposed location for the additional dog park is M.O. Moran Reserve which is located on the Elwood Foreshore, next to the Bay Trail, St Kilda Marina, car parking, and the Elwood residential area.
- 4.3 Elwood is a residential area consisting predominantly of low and medium density apartments whose residents do not have access to private open space. The Elwood community has long campaigned for Council to provide a fenced dog off-leash area. This project will deliver a dedicated fenced dog off-leash area that is safe, accessible and able to accommodate high use to meet the community's needs.
- 4.4 M.O. Moran Reserve is an ideal location for a dog off-leash area. It is already a designated off-leash area, it is safe with a high amenity value, is close to parking and walking trails and separated from residences by a major road.
- 4.5 Council's draft Public Space Strategy includes a priority action to deliver a new fenced dog-off-leash area in M.O. Moran Reserve.



- 4.6 Council's design included a number of features to support dog park use (as outlined in best practice dog park planning) these items include:
- Paths (internal and external): To enable access from car park and surrounding parkland to and around the park for all abilities
 - Rubbish Bins: To be used for dog bags, without bins there is potential smell issues
 - Seating: Council likely to receive complaints without this feature
 - Drinking Fountain with dog bowl: To enable all visitors and dogs to hydrate
 - Entry and Park signage: Without signage Council will be unable to communicate park rules w
 - Garden Beds: Without garden beds in park there are no alternate areas of play and no natural points of park to close off areas should there be turf damage – poor design outcome
 - Additional Planting: Part of the approved design by DELWP
- 4.7 Option one (Basic Dog Park) is the park that fits closest to the current allocated budget and requires the least amount of Council contribution however, it excludes the following items:
- All paths (perimeter asphalt paths, concrete entry points and internal granitic sand paths)
 - Rubbish bins
 - Seating
 - Drinking fountains (with dog bowls)
 - Entry and park signage
 - Garden beds and planting
- 4.8 Option two (Full Suite) is the park as designed with all the recommended items and supporting features that create a successful dog park however requires the most additional funding by Council.
- 4.9 Option three (Extended Dog Park) is the park as designed with all the recommended items and supporting features that create a successful dog park but a reduced budget for garden beds and planting, it is expected there would be minimal impact to the finished product compared with option two. Requires mid-level of funding from Council.
- 4.10 Soil testing has been undertaken to ensure the reserve is suitable to be used as a fenced dog off-leash area. The report concluded that Council should develop a soil management plan (SMP) and maintain the existing separation layers (i.e. lawns and grass cover and mulched vegetation areas) to reduce exposure to contaminated soil, then this site is suitable to be used as a fenced dog off-leash area. To ensure that the park remains useable and appropriate for dog off-leash use, there is a considerable ongoing maintenance requirement. This is further outlined in this report.



- 4.11 Council has been the recipient of a DELWP grant. The contribution must be expended prior to June 30, 2022 to remain eligible for the funding.
- 4.12 Coastal Crown Consent has been issued based on the current design.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1 DELWP has been involved throughout the design phase to ensure alignment to the funding agreement.
- 5.2 DELWP have granted Coastal Crown Consent for this project.
- 5.3 Commercial recreation provider (Skydiving Australia) who use M.O. Moran Reserve for their day to day operations have been informed of plans to upgrade the park.
- 5.4 Community engagement in the form of a letterbox drop to surrounding residents will be undertaken to provide the community opportunity to comment on the final design.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There is a formal funding Agreement in place between Council and DELWP for funding of the project.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 7.1 A total budget of \$275,000 was allocated to the project to include the construction of the dog park and all associated items. This funding was made up solely by the DELWP grant with no Council contribution.
- 7.2 \$29,830.00 in expenses occurred in 2020/21 for project feasibility, technical assessments (including soil testing), and design leaving a remaining budget of \$245,170. Cost estimates have indicated that the delivery of the project is likely to exceed the available grant funding.
- 7.3 It is recommended that Council allocate funding above and beyond the DELWP grant funding to fund the shortfall. Under the recommended option, option three, the total projected project cost in 2021/2022 will be \$403,746.20. The total project budget is comprised of the following components:

<u>Spend to date:</u>	<u>\$29,830</u>
Project Costs:	\$40,000
Soil Management:	\$62,000
Construction Costs:	\$265,042
<u>Contingency:</u>	<u>\$36,704.20</u>
Total Costs:	\$433,576.20
Approved Budget:	\$275,000
Budget Shortfall:	\$158,576.20

- 7.4 An additional \$158,576.20 will be required to proceed with option three with sufficient funding for construction, soil management, contingency and all other associated costs.



- 7.5 As part of feasibility and early design, it has been determined that significant ongoing management will be required to ensure that the proposed dog off-leash area is maintained in a state that is safe and useable for dogs and their owners. This includes management of the top layer of material (grass, garden beds, etc). to ensure that there is separation between users and any contamination on the site. By its nature, a space dedicated to dog off-leash use is often dug up. This means that regular replacement of turf, garden bed maintenance, etc. is required to keep the space at the appropriate standard.
- 7.6 A detailed cost analysis has been undertaken to understand the cost of maintaining the park going forward, the expected (estimated) ongoing costs of the park are outlined below:

ITEM	SCHEDULE	EST COST (PER ANNUM)
Citywide attendance to monitor and temp fence areas	Weekly (2 hours per week)	\$10,400
Bin Collection (2 bins)	Weekly	\$2,000
Oversewing (with Seasonal grass if required)	6 Monthly	\$6,000
Turf Replacement (Maxi rolls)	6 Monthly (1000m2)	\$32,000
Mulch Replacement	6 Monthly (500m2)	\$6,000
Plant Replacement	6 Monthly	\$2,000
Asbestos inspection by qualified hygienist	6 Monthly	\$2,000
Irrigation Maintenance (including head replacement)	Annually	\$2,000
Drink Fountain Maintenance	Bi-Annually	\$250
Path Maintenance	Bi-Annually	\$1500

- 7.7 As outlined, it is anticipated that annual maintenance and upkeep of the space will be in the order of \$64,150.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 8.1 As per the conditions of Coastal Crown Consent, no vegetation will be disrupted as part of the project and further planting will be undertaken as part of the project.



- 8.2 The selected contractor will be required to manage all activities on site in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act and all other relevant legislation.
- 8.3 Any soil excavated from the works will be disposed of in line with EPA regulations.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 9.1 During construction, the contractor's compound will be surrounded by fencing to limit access and ensure public safety, whilst allowing passive surveillance of the site.
- 9.2 At times, there will be truck and equipment movement, and noise emitting during construction. The amenity impacts upon local residents will be minimised, and they will be kept informed through the project website and on-site signage.
- 9.3 Council officers will work closely with the park users to offer alternate open space while the site is under construction.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

- 10.1 This project primarily aligns with the Liveable Port Phillip direction in the Council Plan through providing the community with enhanced public spaces. It also supports the Inclusive Port Phillip direction through enhanced community access to recreation infrastructure designed for shared community use that enables people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to participate.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

- 11.1.1 Subject to Council's decision, the project will go to public tender in early 2022.
- 11.1.2 Construction is scheduled to commence in March/April 2022 with practical completion expected in June 2022.
- 11.1.3 An opening event will be scheduled in July 2022 with the community able to use the space from this point.

11.2 COMMUNICATION

- 11.2.1 Subject to Council's decision, the public tender will be prepared and advertised in early 2022.
- 11.2.2 Letterbox drop will be undertaken prior to the tender being advertised.
- 11.2.3 Signage will be displayed onsite notifying residents of the works with a link to the project webpage.

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