

6.2.8 Response to Petition - Lighting in Don Jackson Dog Park

Responsible GM: Luke Connell
Author: Samantha Cross

Recommendation(s)

That the petition requesting the installation of lighting at the Don Jackson reserve dog off leash area be received and the lead petitioner be advised that Council does not support their request on the following grounds:

- Council does not support the use of passive reserves out of daylight hours due the safety concerns associated with such use,
- Don Jackson reserve closely abuts residential properties, and providing lighting and supporting use after dark would potentially create a negative experience for neighbouring residents, and
- Council does not have funds available to install lighting at the reserve

Attachments

1. Healthy By Design Guidelines [6.2.8.1 - 12 pages]
2. Off Leash Dog Area Hierarchy Draft Jan 2018 [6.2.8.2 - 1 page]

Executive Summary

This report acknowledges and responds to a petition received from residents requesting the installation of lighting at the recently completed Don Jackson Dog Off Leash area.

Background

A petition was received by Council with 107 signatures from residents who regularly use the Don Jackson Reserve Dog Park located on Ahern Rd in Pakenham. The petition requested that solar lighting be installed within the reserve to be lit between 5:30pm – 7:30pm during winter months to allow people to safely exercise their dogs after daylight hours.

Council officers recognise Don Jackson Dog Park is a highly utilised and popular off leash area enjoyed by residents and visitors from surrounding areas. However, this reserve was never intended or designed for night-time use. It is located directly behind residential properties, some of whom have complained to Council with regards to excessive dog barking and conflict between dog owners. As these complains have been made during the day, it is likely that supporting after hours use, would increase park use and exacerbate concerns for those residing directly behind the dog off leash area.

It was also mentioned by the petitioner that many of the dog owners are women who feel unsafe in the dark on their own without lights. Providing lighting does not necessarily equate to improved safety. Whilst Don Jackson backs onto residential properties, there is poor natural surveillance into that area of the park. Providing lighting could provide false perceptions of safety as it does not guarantee safe places. Exercising would be better placed utilising existing well-lit pedestrian pathways along key routes.

Council's Dog Off Leash Area Hierarchy does not identify lighting as a consideration in the design and implementation of any level of dog off leash areas. It is recommended that a precedent not be set by supporting lighting in passive reserves outside of daylight hours, unless there was a specific need and site identified, and if a project was designed to support night-time use.

Council officers also do not believe it is financially viable for lighting to be installed for approximately two hours per night, six months of the year at a cost of approximately \$50k plus ongoing maintenance costs. There is currently no capital budget allocation for passive reserve lighting.

Policy Implications

Healthy By Design Guidelines (attached for reference)

4. Seating, signage, lighting, fencing and walls.

4.10 - locate lighting where people are likely to gather, along walking and cycling routes, at key road crossing points and intersections with pedestrian and/or cyclist demand.

4.11 - Avoid the exclusive use of low level or in-ground lights as it limits visibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

4.12 Provide lighting in areas intended for night use and/or areas accessed by pedestrians after dark. Avoid lighting areas not designed for night use.

Off leash Dog Area Hierarchy (Draft 2018) (attached for reference)

Don Jackson dog park is considered a regional level off leash area. The infrastructure provision as outlined in the off-leash hierarchy includes:

- Dog agility equipment
- Fencing
- Drinking fountain with dog bowl
- Seating
- Rubbish bins
- Natural and built shade structures
- Arboriculture assets
- Pathways
- Garden beds
- Signage
- Sealed car parking
- Turf cells at gate entrance

Relevance to Council Plan

1.1 Our People - Access to a variety of services for all

1.1.1 Continually review services to ensure those provided by Council meet community needs.

1.4 Our People - Improved health and wellbeing for all

1.4.3 Routinely investigate community health and wellbeing issues to inform Council's planning and activities.

2.2 Our Community - Engaged communities

2.2.1 Provide a range of opportunities that encourage community participation in Council policy and strategy development.

2.2.2 Communicate the activities and decisions of Council to the residents in a variety of ways.

2.3 Our Community - Increased levels of community participation

2.3.3 Strengthen Council's community engagement through the development, implementation

and promotion of effective practices.

3.1 Our Environment - Provision and maintenance of assets on a life-cycle basis

3.1.2 Develop new and maintain existing parks, gardens and reserves in a sustainable way.

3.4 Our Environment - Natural and built environments supporting the improved health and wellbeing of our communities

3.4.1 Plan and develop built environments that support improved health and wellbeing of our communities through implementation of the Healthy by Design guidelines.

5.3 Our Governance - Long-term financial sustainability

5.3.1 Make financial decisions that achieve the objectives of Council and long-term financial sustainability.

5.3.2 Make financial decisions that are fair and ethical and balance costs and benefits between present and future generations.

5.3.3 Manage the municipality's finances and assets in a responsible way.

Climate Emergency Consideration

Not applicable.

Consultation/Communication

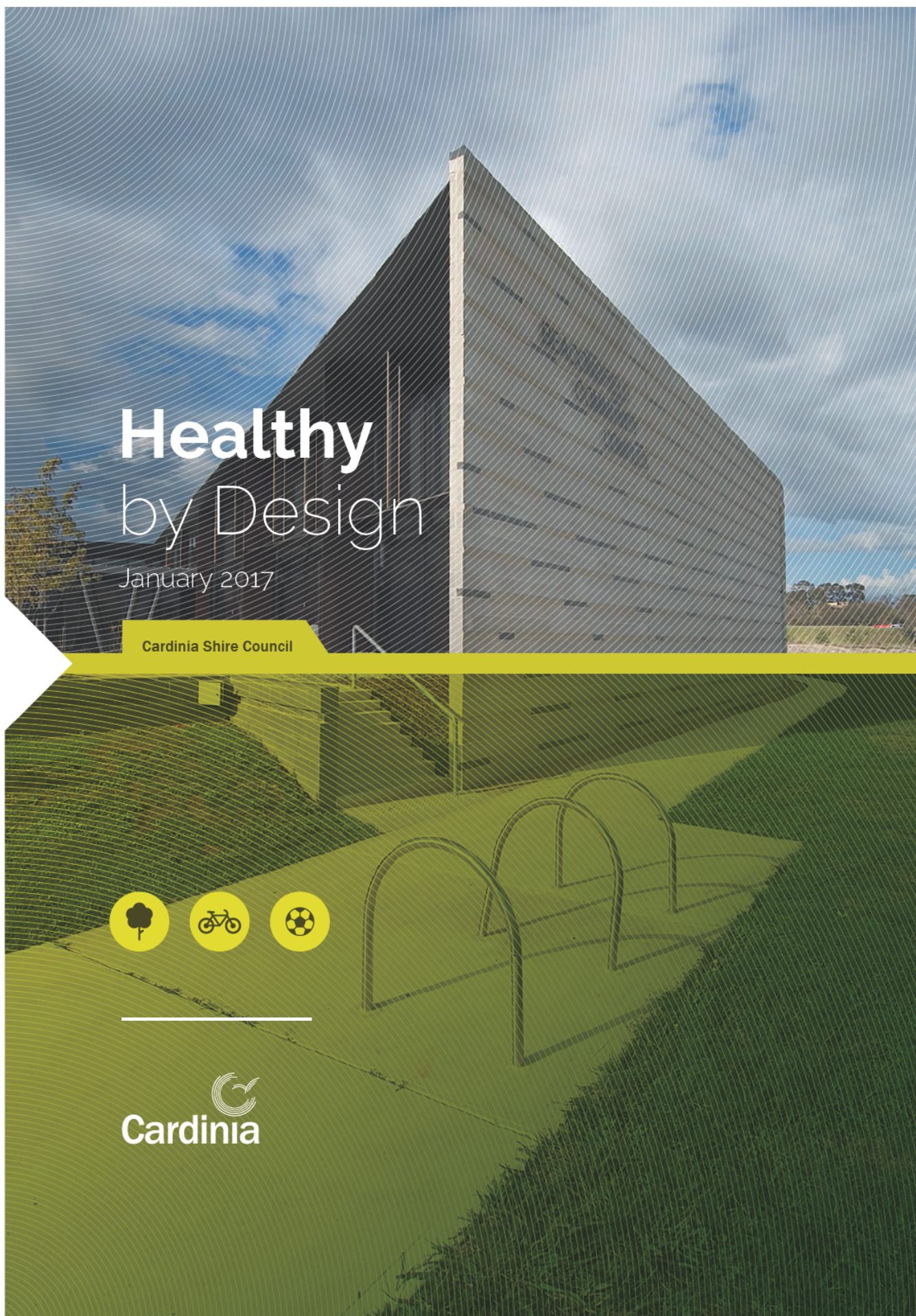
Extensive community consultation and engagement was undertaken for the design of Don Jackson Dog off Leash area. Most of the feedback received was positive, with constructive feedback and suggestions for improvements. Lighting was not raised at all during this process.

Financial and Resource Implications

There is currently no capital budget allocated to fund lighting infrastructure in passive reserves.

Conclusion

Without a definitive policy guiding the provision of lighting in parks and reserves, Council officers referred to Council's Healthy by Design Guidelines that aim to ensure areas are well planned, safe and attractive, as well as the Dog off Leas Areas Hierarchy which guides infrastructure provision for all off leash areas. These documents in addition to concerns raised by people residing along the boundary of the Don Jackson Dog Park, form the basis for the recommendation to not support the petition.



What is Healthy by Design

Healthy by Design is a document that was produced by the Heart Foundation in 2004 to support local councils to plan and build environments to support healthy living.

Healthy by Design seeks to provide the following outcomes:

- well planned networks of walking and cycling routes;
- streets with direct, safe and convenient access;
- local destinations within walking distances from homes;
- accessible open spaces for recreation and leisure;
- conveniently located public transport stops;
- and local neighbourhoods that foster community spirit.

Essentially it aims to integrate health into planning, to allow people to be able to choose to be active in an environment that is convenient, safe, and pleasant.

Cardinia Shire health and built environment context

Cardinia Shire is a rapidly developing municipality that will still experience a significant growth rate in the foreseeable

future. The majority of the development is in the Growth Corridor¹. In some cases, this has resulted in built environments that are not conducive to cycling and walking, that is, to active transport/lifestyles.

Physical activity is an important part of a person's health and wellbeing. In particular, walking is a simple, cheap and effective way to incorporate physical activity in our daily routines. The difficulty is often finding an environment in which to walk that is well connected, accessible, attractive, and safe.

Currently 30.4% of people in Cardinia Shire do not meet physical activity guidelines². Physical inactivity results in an increased risk of some cancer types, obesity, hypertension cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, diabetes and depression. Cardinia Shire's Healthy by Design document seeks to encourage

increased physical activity by ensuring that the built environment within the Shire naturally supports active lifestyles.

The built environment has an enormous impact on the desire and ability for people to be physically active. Topography, connectivity, path type and width, provision of seating and shade, access to destinations, public transport, perceptions of safety and the aesthetics of the environment all have an influence..

Cardinia Shire's Healthy by Design document seeks to encourage increased physical activity by ensuring that the built environment within the Shire naturally supports active lifestyles.

1. See Cardinia Shire Council: http://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.aspx?Page_Id=3038

2. See Department of Health: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/health-pub-hlth-strateg-phys-act-guidelines#apaadult>



Benefits

For the community

Healthy by Design will ensure that new development creates a safe, attractive, and well planned environment that allows residents to maximise their opportunities to undertake physical activity. Being active in public spaces also promotes community interaction and contributes towards an increased sense of belonging. It also reduces reliance on cars for local trips and this, over the long term, saves on petrol and servicing costs, due to reduced wear and tear on vehicles.

Other factors that have a positive impact on the likelihood of people to exercise include providing paths of a gradient, width, surface and type that will be comfortable for the majority of people to use. The use of seating and shade devices, paths to destinations such as shops, community facilities and public transport, and passive surveillance over paths and public open space are important contributors. Attractive spaces that are vegetated and contain appropriate street furniture and links

between different areas and neighbourhoods will also have a positive impact. At its heart Healthy by Design is also about fostering community spirit and encouraging people to interact in public spaces.

For the developer

Research by the Heart Foundation indicates that communities value the outcomes being sought under Healthy by Design¹. This includes a desire to live close to attractive and usable open spaces, and a preference for paved or concreted footpaths for cycling and walking. This preference is becoming more prevalent as people are increasingly aware of the benefits of living a more active lifestyle.

It is recognised, by both the community and the development industry, that attractive open space, walking and cycling paths are significant selling points for homes. Research by the Heart Foundation indicates that improved

walking and cycling environments have a positive impact on property values². Healthy by Design builds on these assets by ensuring these spaces are functional and practical.

Neighbourhood design is an important part of being able to achieve these opportunities. Parks create an attractive outlook for surrounding dwellings, as well as providing spaces for informal recreation activities, contact with nature and play areas for children.

Access to public transport is an important priority for many people, as is being within easy walking distance of a range of local services.

Attractive and activated streetscapes provide a safe environment that encourages walking and also adds value to an area as people see places with these features as a pleasant to live in.

1. Heart Foundation 2011, *Creating healthy Neighbourhoods – Consumer preferences for healthy development*.

2. Heart Foundation 2011, *Good for Business – The benefits of making streets more walking and cycling friendly*.

Being active in public spaces also promotes community interaction and contributes towards an increased sense of belonging.



Image: facilities like skate park, exercise equipment provide a great opportunity for fun and recreation.

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What does it apply to?

The Healthy by Design guide will be used across Council to assess planning applications. It will be applicable to all plans including landscape and engineering plans.

Healthy by Design **will only apply to** new developments or redevelopments that meet any of the following conditions:

- All developments and subdivisions of **20 lots or more**
- Adjacent parcels of land where Council considers that there is **potential for 20 or more dwellings or lots** to be provided overtime
- Where **open space** is being provided on the subject site or immediately adjacent
- Where the need for a **cycle and/or pedestrian link** has been identified in the township strategy, structure plan,

other Council strategy-policy or any other relevant consideration.

Where other standards or guidelines are also applicable, the higher standard of detail and delivery will override Healthy by Design (e.g. Precinct Structure Plans).

In addition Healthy by Design should be considered as part of the development of landscape master plans and other Council strategies where relevant.

Healthy by Design principles should be applied where possible but where there are inhibiting factors such as topography or geography, due consideration should be given to these factors.

Healthy by Design should be considered as part of the development of landscape master plans and other Council strategies where relevant.



Image: kids enjoying a bicycle path.





▼
Image: a shared path in a natural setting is ideal for exercise.



Design considerations checklist

Cardinia Shire Council

Walking and cycling routes

01
CHECKLIST



Assess as: P – present PP – partially present NP – not present NA – not applicable

Item	Design consideration	Assessment
1.1	Plan a variety of paths, offering both direct and leisurely routes	
1.2	Provide walking routes along predictable and desired paths of travel; including, but not limited to, approaches to schools, open space, parks, public transport and shopping precincts.	
1.3	Where there is the opportunity provide circuit paths to improve visual interest by avoiding back tracking.	
1.4	Ensure any internal paths connect with any existing or proposed paths outside the boundary of the development to provide route continuity.	
1.5	Create spaces for people to walk where they can be seen by cyclists, other pedestrians, motorists and nearby residents. Avoid tunnels and overpasses where possible to increase visibility and perceptions of safety.	
1.6	Ensure clear sightlines along walking and cycling routes using appropriate landscaping, low walls, permeable fencing and effective lighting. Avoid blank walls or high solid fencing.	
1.7	Provide footpaths on both sides of the street.	
1.8	Provide durable, non-slip, continuous footpaths.	
1.9	Ensure gradients at crossing points are minimal, safe and comfortable for people with limited mobility and those using wheelchairs, prams and trolleys.	
1.10	Footpaths should be a minimum of 1.5 metres in width to minimise bottlenecks.	
1.11	Provide shared paths a minimum of 2.5 metres in width along arterial roads and approach routes to desired destinations.	
1.12	Provide dedicated bicycle infrastructure, such as lanes and paths, in areas with current and foreseeable high demand in the future.	
1.13	In residential areas provide protection for pedestrians from vehicles by providing an outer nature strip width of 0.5m or more. Choose barrier not 'rollover' curb design when there is no nature strip.	
1.14	Plant trees along walking and cycling routes for aesthetics and shade.	
1.15	Plant trees that require minimal maintenance and will not impact paths or clearances when fully grown.	
1.16	Ensure that the planting does not provide opportunities for concealment of people.	
1.17	Plants along shared paths should have a minimum clearance of 0.5m from the edge of the path when fully grown.	

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Public
open space

02

CHECKLIST



Assess as: P – present PP – partially present NP – not present NA – not applicable

Item	Design consideration	Assessment
2.1	Provide open space within 400m of dwellings.	
2.2	Provide large local parks within safe and comfortable walking distance from dwellings (e.g. 800m).	
2.3	Landscape public and open space to provide pleasant environments for people to sit, meet and talk.	
2.4	Plant trees, other vegetation and construct shelters within open space to provide shade and weather protection for people.	
2.5	Provide a range of facilities to create active recreation opportunities for all ages.	
2.6	Where appropriate, provide exercise and training equipment along walking paths to encourage more vigorous activity.	
2.7	Consider the provision of amenities (e.g. BBQ, rotundas, drinking fountains, public toilets) appropriate to the location and importance of the open space in accordance with the Asset Management Strategy (2014-2018)..	
2.8	Locate parks to encourage maximum public access and to facilitate natural surveillance from nearby housing, businesses or people passing.	
2.9	Orientate houses to overlook parks for passive surveillance.	
2.10	Avoid solid fencing or walls along park perimeters, instead use fencing that enables clear sight lines of the open space.	
2.11	Plan multiple accessible pedestrian entry and exit points to public open spaces.	
2.12	Install bike and scooter racks at local destinations.	
2.13	Ensure that creeks have sufficient buffers to accommodate landscape and trails for the community.	

Streets and access ways

03

CHECKLIST



Assess as: P – present PP – partially present NP – not present NA – not applicable

Item	Design consideration	Assessment
3.1	Local roads and access ways should be designed to ensure a low speed vehicle environment.	
3.2	Street layouts should be based on a grid that provides legible travel routes. They should be well integrated with the existing or proposed surrounding streets.	
3.3	Avoid cul-de-sacs but when required ensure they are well signed and have foot and cycle access through to adjoining streets and, where possible, along desire lines.	
3.4	Design attractive, interesting and welcoming street frontages. Encourage porches, verandas and shop fronts along commercial streets rather than high solid walls or security shutters and/or solid fences.	
3.5	On residential streets avoid continuous garages, dense hedges and continuous rear or side fences.	
3.6	Plant trees to provide shade and a pleasant environment for people on the street.	
3.7	Design streetscapes to enable natural surveillance of people walking, cycling and gathering at points of interest.	
3.8	Advocate for pedestrian crossings at key desire lines along VicRoads declared arterials roads in accordance with VicRoads warrants.	
3.9	Crossing points should be considered for roads adjacent to places such as shopping precincts, schools, large retirement villages, regional parks and other major pedestrian destinations. The type of crossing will need to respond to the local context (e.g. desire lines) and meet Council's requirements and VicRoad's warrants.	
3.10	Maintain clear sightlines for people travelling on or across streets on foot or bike, particularly intersections, roundabouts and pedestrian crossings.	
3.11	Use long lasting tactiles that best suit the environment to mark pedestrian crossings.	
3.12	Advocate to the responsible authority (e.g. VicRoads) for lower speed limits in peak pedestrian areas such as shopping precincts, schools and community facilities.	
3.13	Avoid the use of roundabouts in areas of intense bicycle and/or pedestrian activity.	
3.14	Where roundabouts or other traffic management devices exist, maximise visibility and safety of pedestrians and cyclists.	
3.15	Encourage the provision of separated bicycle lanes or paths along streets with traffic speeds over 50km/h.	
3.16	Consider the installation of visual and/or tactile markings along bike lanes to create clear divisions between cyclist, pedestrian and vehicle spaces.	
3.17	Maintain safe, unobstructed paths of travel for cyclists and pedestrians.	

Seating, signage, lighting, fencing and walls

04

CHECKLIST



Assess as: P – present PP – partially present NP – not present NA – not applicable

Item	Design consideration	Assessment
4.1	Provide seats to rest at frequent intervals. The seating should be located atop a firm non slip surface with sufficient space for a wheelchair or pram adjacent to the seating. Arrange seats to facilitate social interaction (e.g. position at right angles).	
4.2	Provide seating, including some with backs and armrests. Seats and armrest height should also be set at levels to suit adults. Provide seating at a suitable height for children, where possible.	
4.3	Provide shaded seating options.	
4.4	Align seats with attractive vistas and points of special interest, e.g. outlooks over play areas, wetlands, local views or sports ovals.	
4.5	Seating should have suitable clearance from shared paths for safety.	
4.6	Advocate for directional signage and site maps to guide people to points of interest such as major community destinations.	
4.7	Ensure signage is free from visual obstructions.	
4.8	Illuminate signs at night or locate signs under street lights.	
4.9	Where shared paths or recreational walking trails are present include signage leading to the paths or trails and at regular intervals along the route. Include distance, destinations, gradient, trail type, directional indicators and locally relevant information.	
4.10	Locate lighting where people are likely to gather, along walking and cycling routes, at key road crossing points and intersections with pedestrian and/or cyclist demand.	
4.11	Avoid the exclusive use of low level or in-ground lights as it limits visibility for pedestrians and cyclists.	
4.12	Provide lighting in areas intended for night use and/or areas accessed by pedestrians after dark. Avoid lighting areas not designed for night use.	
4.13	Use low walls or transparent fencing along primary street frontages and open space. Design side fences to achieve a balance between privacy and visual connection to the public realm.	
4.14	Design habitable buildings so that they interact with public space.	

Public
transport05
CHECKLIST

Assess as: P – present PP – partially present NP – not present NA – not applicable

Item	Design consideration	Assessment
5.1	Ensure development is located to take advantage of access to public transport.	
5.2	Advocate for the location of public transport stops to be within a comfortable walking distance for most people (i.e. between 400 and 800 metres) from residential areas and activity centres.	
5.3	Plan clearly signed, well lit and direct routes for people walking and cycling to public transport stops.	
5.4	Advocate for the location of public transport stops to be in active locations and clearly visible from surrounding developments such as shops and houses.	
5.5	Advocate for shelters at public transport stops that provide weather protection, comfort and appropriate lighting and seating.	
5.6	Advocate for clearly displayed legible public transport service information.	
5.7	Advocate for the installation of adequate facilities for bike parking at train stations.	
5.8	Advocate for a regular inspection and maintenance program of public transport facilities.	
5.9	Ensure clear and safe crossing points adjacent to public transport stops.	
5.10	Provide a collector road network that is suitable for bus circulation.	
5.11	Advocate for express bus routes along major arterial-collector roads between major destinations (e.g. large towns, important shopping centres, etc).	



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National Relay Service (NRS): Customers who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment can contact Council through the National Relay Service: TTY users, phone 133 677 then ask for 1300 787 624. Speak and Listen (speech-to-speech relay) users, phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 1300 787 624. If you need an interpreter, phone the Translator Interpretation Service on 131 450.



Off Leash Dog Area Hierarchy (Draft) 2018			
	Regional	District	Neighbourhood
Purpose	Open space that provides off leash dog areas with a number of activities and infrastructure available. Attracts use from within the local community as well as beyond the Shire. May be located within popular sites that contain other recreational opportunities.	Open space that provides dedicated off leash dog areas. Attracts use from across the Shire. May be located within prominent sites that contain other recreational opportunities.	Open space that provides dedicated off leash dog areas. Attracts use from local residents regularly utilising the site.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agility activities • Exercise • Dog socialisation • Relaxation and enjoyment of open space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise • Dog socialisation • Relaxation and enjoyment of open space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise • Dog socialisation • Relaxation and enjoyment of open space
Reserve type	Non-Specific	Within district reserves	Within neighbourhood reserves
Visitor Catchment	Caters for residents of Cardinia and beyond	Attracts people from within the municipality	Generally caters for local residents, and surrounding neighbourhoods
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog agility equipment • Fencing • Drinking fountain with dog bowl • Seating • Rubbish bins • Natural and built shade structures • Arboriculture assets • Pathways • Garden beds • Signage • Sealed car parking • Turf cells at gate entrance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partial fencing • Drinking fountain with dog bowl • Seating • Rubbish bins • Natural and built shade structures • Pathways • Garden beds • Signage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partial or no fencing • Seating • Natural shade • Pathways • Garden beds • Signage
Replacement cost	\$275,000	\$50,000	\$10,000