



Maryland Fenced Off-Leash Dog Park

Community Engagement Report

April 2023

Prepared by: Media, Engagement, Economy and Corporate Affairs, City of Newcastle

Enquiries: engage@ncc.nsw.gov.au or (02) 4974 2000

Table of contents

Executive summary	3
1. Background.....	4
2. Engagement objectives	4
3. Communication and promotion	5
4. Engagement activities	6
5. Key findings	7
5.1 Statements of support	7
5.2 Concerns/issues.....	7
5.3 Design alterations/feedback	9
5.4 Suggested facilities	10
6. Next steps	12
Appendix I – Draft Concept Plan.....	13
Appendix II – Promotional materials	15
Have your say webpage	15
Flyer and onsite signage	16
Social media	17
Newsletter	18
Media release.....	19
Example media coverage	20
Appendix III – Submissions	21

Executive summary

Following recommendations from the Dogs in Open Space Plan, investigations took place into the potential to integrate a fenced off-leash area at Maryland Drive Reserve as part of the Maryland Creek realignment design.

Draft concept plans for a Maryland Fenced off-leash dog park were developed and placed on public exhibition from 21 November to 16 December 2022. A total of 49 submissions were received,

Feedback from the community could be broken down into four key themes:

1. Statements of support

25 submissions made general statements of support for the draft concept design and the overall idea of incorporating a fenced off-leash dog park.

2. Concerns/issues

19 submissions discussed concerns /issues with the draft concept plan. The most frequently mentioned issues/concerns were:

- Ongoing rubbish dumping in the area,
- Drainage problems that can leave the park unusable and the implications development may have on local flooding
- Possible increased aggression from fencing-in larger dogs
- Whether this is an appropriate use of council funds

3. Design alterations/feedback

14 submissions suggested design alterations. The most suggested alterations were:

- A higher fence
- Installing security cameras and lighting
- Adding more trees for shade cover and screens
- Expanding the carpark and traffic management plans
- Less seating

4. Suggested additional facilities

14 submissions proposed additional facilities to be incorporated into the draft concept plans. The most suggested additional facilities were:

- Installing dog agility stations
- Toilet facilities
- A dog sensory garden

1. Background

In 2019, City of Newcastle (CN) adopted the Dogs in Open Space Plan to guide the provision, improvement and management of dog off-leash areas over the next 10 years. The Plan recommended the development of some strategically located fenced dog parks, including investigating the potential to integrate a fenced off-leash area at Maryland Drive Reserve as part of the Maryland Creek realignment design.

Draft plans have been created, with key proposed improvements including:

- Two separate fully fenced dog off-leash areas for small and large dogs
- Amenities including shelters, seating and bubblers
- Formalised carpark with accessible parking
- New trees and landscaping
- Existing unfenced dog off-leash area to be retained

A copy of the draft concept plan is available in **Appendix I – Draft Concept Plan**.

2. Engagement objectives

To better understand community opinion on the proposed upgrades at Maryland Drive Reserve, CN placed the draft Maryland fenced off-leash dog park concept plan (hereafter referred to as the 'draft concept plan') on public exhibition from 21 November to 16 December 2022.







More specifically, the engagement sought to:

- Raise awareness in the community of the project
- Understand the views and opinions of the community on the proposed upgrades, including residents, community groups and park users

3. Communication and promotion

During the engagement period, a communications campaign was implemented to raise awareness of the concept plan and promote the opportunity for community members to provide feedback.

Key communications activities are summarised on the following page, and key pieces of communications collateral are available in **Appendix II – Promotional materials**.

Channel	Description	Reach
 Have Your Say webpage	A dedicated project webpage was created on CN's Have Your Say landing page. The page aimed to provide information and raise awareness about the proposed fenced off-leash dog area at Maryland Drive Reserve.	611 visits
 Flyers and onsite signage	<p>Flyers were distributed to Maryland local residents</p> <p>Onsite signage was also installed at Maryland Drive Reserve</p>	<p>37 flyers</p> <p>3 corflutes</p>
 Social media	The draft Maryland fenced off-leash dog park concept plan was promoted via an unpaid post of CN's Facebook page on 29 November 2022. The post intended to raise awareness and encourage people to have their say.	<p>Reach: 8,220</p> <p>Engagements: 319</p> <p>Link clicks: 228</p> <p>post comments: 12</p> <p>Likes/reactions: 69</p> <p>Shares: 10</p>
 Newsletters	An e-newsletter was distributed to Newcastle Voice subscribers on 1 December 2022 raising awareness of the project and inviting community feedback.	Distributed to 2,433 subscribers
 Councillor Memo	A memo was distributed to CN Councillors on 16 November 2022, advising of the engagement and providing information on how constituents can provide feedback and comment.	n/a
 Media coverage	A media release was issued on 29 November 2022 and was subsequently reported by Newcastle Live, Newcastle Weekly, Newfm, Cessnock Advertiser, Maitland Mercury and intouch magazine.	n/a

4. Engagement activities

The community were invited to provide feedback on the draft concept plan from 21 November to 16 December 2022.

The community were able to provide feedback by:

- Completing the online form via the HYS website
- Emailing engage@ncc.nsw.gov.au

A total of 49 submissions were made providing feedback on the draft concept plan, all via the online form.

Copies of submissions are available in **Appendix III – Submissions**

5. Key findings

All submissions were reviewed and broken down into four key themes:

Key theme	Net number of submissions
Statements of support	25
Concerns/issues	19
Design alterations/feedback	14
Suggested additional facilities	14

5.1 Statements of support

25 of the 49 submissions (51%) provided statements of support for the draft concept plan.

These submissions discussed liking the concept plan overall, feeling that a fenced park will be safer than an unfenced one, supporting the idea of having two separate areas for small and large dogs and the convenience of the location.

Table 1: Examples of statements of support

Examples: Statements of support (N=25)

"I'd love to see this become a fenced area. Open off-leash spaces make me uncomfortable as I dislike large dogs, and there have been times my kids and I have been walking or scootering along the pathway at Maryland Drive and had unleashed dogs approach us. This is a great space to turn into a fenced dog area"

"I love this plan. Will make great use of the space"

"Please do build a fully-fenced, off-leash small dog park at Maryland! I have to travel quite far to safely let my small dog play in the fenced North Lambton small dog park - it would be really awesome to have a local park, and lots of our neighbours with small dogs are in agreement. Thank you!"

5.2 Concerns/issues

19 submissions raised concerns/issues that they have with the draft concept plan. These were then broken down into seven subgroups:

Table 2: Subgroups in the key theme concerns/issues

Subgroups for key theme: Concerns/issues	Comments
Rubbish dumping issues	8
Drainage problems in the park	7
Concern with aggression in the larger dog area/separating dogs by size	4
Disagree with spending money on dog facilities	2
Concern over noise from increased usage	1
Concern over behaviour of owners in a fenced dog park	1
Request environmental documents be made publicly available	1

Submissions included 8 comments discussing concerns over **rubbish dumping** and what will be done to try and prevent it, with the current site often being used as a place of illegal dumping. One suggestion was to have the bin be located inside of the fenced area, whilst others discussed the need for security cameras.

Table 3: Examples of comments discussing rubbish dumping issues

Examples: Rubbish dumping issues (N=8)
<i>"...The current bin is constantly piled up with rubbish from annoying residents. Would be better to place the bins inside the fenced area so it's harder to dump?..."</i>
<i>"...I just hope whoever dumps their rubbish at the garbage bin there doesn't ruin it, needs cameras there"</i>
<i>"...In addition the current bin there is constantly used as rubbish tip and either needs to be removed and/or emptied more regularly..."</i>

7 submissions raised concerns over **drainage issues**, with the park currently getting very muddy and unusable in wet weather for many weeks. Concerns over were also raised regarding any new development negatively impacting nearby properties by exacerbating flood problems.

Table 4: Examples of comments discussing drainage issues

Examples: Drainage issues (N=7)
<i>"My concern is after heavy rain and overuse the area will becomes very muddy. I would never use the dog park if I had to put a muddy dog back in the car. Some kind of drainage needs to be addressed for the proposed area"</i>
<i>"... What flood assessment has been carried out? The proposed off leash dog park is a flood prone area and fills up in heavy rainfall. My property is severely impacted by flooding, my paddock went at least 1 metre underwater during the rainfall events in July 2022. I am concerned that changes and development in the proposed off leash dog area will exacerbate the flooding I experience at my property... the proposed fenced off leash dog park and the Maryland Creek Rehabilitation Project has the potential to change flood behaviour in this location. How are cumulative impacts being managed to not exacerbate downstream impacts to other residents?..."</i>

4 submissions discussed **safety concerns with creating a separate area for larger dogs**. The submissions suggested that having the larger dogs in a confined space may lead to aggression, and raised concerns for larger dogs that may have a more nervous disposition that would not do well being in an area with bigger more aggressive dogs.

Table 5: Examples of comments discussing concerns with aggression in the larger dog area/separating dogs by size

Examples: Aggression in the larger dog area/separating dogs by size (N=4)
<i>"Just dividing the park by large and small dogs is not safe or practical. Many larger but finely built dogs cannot safely play with more solid dog breeds that may be smaller. I have also witnessed a number of falls caused by people being knocked over by the heavier breeds (accidentally) running into them. A small staffy for example can weigh 40kgs while my larger Tamaruke weighs 18kgs. It's important to allow gentle and well behaved larger dogs to access the usually safer "small dog" area. At Lambton Dog park the large dogs side is now unsafe and a dumping ground for out of control dogs..."</i>
<i>"... Fenced area for nervous dogs. Large dog area. Please put a list of dogs permitted to enter any small dog area - to avoid human aggression..."</i>

2 submissions **disagreed with spending money on dog facilities**, believing that money could be better spent elsewhere.

Table 6: Examples of comments disagreeing with spending money on dog facilities

Examples: Disagreeing with spending money on dog facilities (N=2)

"I don't believe in this current economic environment with interest rate hikes, housing rent increase and the general increase of cost of living that "we" should chose as a "priority" to upgrade yet more open spaces for dogs in the City of Newcastle Local Government Areas. And might I add what facility will you suggest for feline owners and other animals? Is this not a form of discrimination of pet choices?... I see this as a disgraceful use of our local government funds and I do not support this allocation at all...."

There were additionally single submissions raising concerns over **noise from the increased usage** of the park the upgrades will lead to, concern that a **fenced dog park** may lead to some owners allowing their dogs to be uncontrolled and requests that **environmental documents** for the site are made publicly available.

5.3 Design alterations/feedback

14 submissions provided feedback on the proposed draft concept design and suggested alterations. These were broken down into 10 subgroups:

Table 7: Subgroups in the key theme design alterations/feedback

Subgroups for key theme: Design alterations/feedback	Comments
Higher fence needed in the larger dog area	4
Install security cameras	3
Add more shade cover/tree screens	2
Larger carpark/parking options	2
Less seating	2
Lighting installed	2
Traffic management/widen the road	2
Clear signage on what breeds/size dogs are allowed in the smaller dog area	1
Have unfenced off-leash area available still/additionally	1
Will design meet accessibility requirements	1

4 submissions stated that a **higher fence** is needed, particularly in the larger dog area and considering that Maryland Drive is busy road.

Table 8: Examples of comments discussing a higher fence in the larger dog area

Examples: Higher fence in the larger dog area (N=4)

"I have concerns about the height of the boundary fence that is to surround the off lead dog park. Maryland Drive is a very busy thoroughfare and a large dog would easily leap the proposed fence..."

"I feel the 1.5 high fence is too short for the larger dog area"

3 submissions suggested that **security cameras** are needed to monitor dog attacks, rubbish dumping and safety.

Table 9: Examples of comments discussing security cameras

Examples: Security cameras (N=3)
"Please put cctv up to protect people from dogs attacking people or other dogs"
"Security cameras for safety"

The following design alterations each had two submissions discussing them:

- Adding in more trees, both for shade cover and to act as screens for nearby houses
- More carparking facilities to account for the increased usage the park will have after the upgrades
- Less seating in the park to encourage people to walk with their dogs
- Low level lighting to increase the hours of usage in the winter
- Better traffic management and widening of the road.

The following design alterations were discussed in single submissions:

- Having clear signage of what size dogs/breeds are allowed in the smaller dog area in order to prevent arguments among users
- Maintain an unfenced off-leash area
- Ensure that the design meets all accessibility requirements

5.4 Suggested facilities

14 submissions provided suggestions on additional facilities that could be included in the upgrades. These were broken down into 10 subgroups:

Table 10: Subgroups in the key theme suggested facilities

Subgroups for key theme: Suggested facilities	Comments
Agility stations/dog obstacle course	6
Add toilet facilities	4
Sensory garden/a variety of plants that offer different smells for the dogs	3
Add a walking concrete walking track around each area	1
Add dog washing facilities	1
Dog toy box	1
Donation boxes installed	1
Exercise/training equipment	1
Water bubblers	1
Water play area	1

Six submissions suggested including some form of **agility stations/dog obstacle course**.

Table 11: Examples of comments suggesting agility stations/dog obstacle course

Examples: Agility stations/dog obstacle course (N=6)
<i>"...Would be great to see a few dog agility obstacles with the park as well..."</i>
<i>"Can you please put in agility equipment for dogs..."</i>

4 submissions stated that **toilet facilities** are needed.

Table 12: Examples of comments suggesting toilet facilities

Examples: Toilet facilities (N=4)
<i>"...I think at least one unisex toilet"</i>
<i>"...Toilet and wash basins for humans..."</i>

3 submissions suggested incorporating a **sensory garden** and types of plants that will offer the dogs a variety of smells in the park, referencing the ones in the Lake Macquarie LGA and discussing how some plants can offer a calming effect for dogs.

Table 13: Examples of comments suggesting a sensory garden

Examples: Sensory garden (N=3)
<i>"... It would be great to see some sort of sensory garden for the dogs or some rocks and water garden they can play in. I have seen something like this in the Lake Macquarie LGA and the dogs love to be able to run around into "different zones". And perhaps a sensory garden to include some plants like, chamomile, lavender and rosemary.. these plants are calming for dogs and would be a great sniffing break for them :)."</i>
<i>"...Plants that offer different smells for dogs to sniff (with a pee protection fence)"</i>

There were single submissions suggesting the addition of:

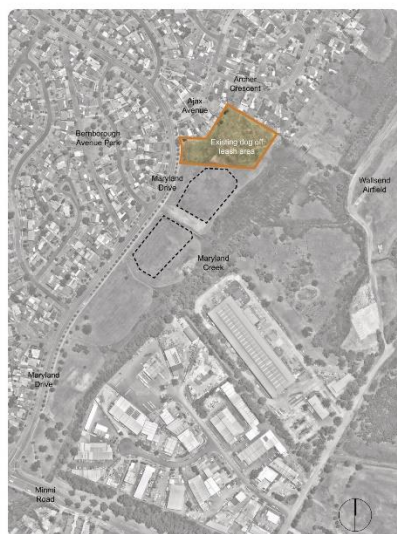
- Concrete walking track around each area
- Dog washing facilities
- A dog toy box
- A donation box for dog charities
- Exercise/training equipment
- A dog water play area

6. Next steps

The project team will finalise the concept plan based on community feedback. Following this, works will be carried out in stages. Stage 1 works to be completed by mid-2023 include: one fully fenced dog off-leash area for all dogs, amenities such as shelter, bubblers and seating, new trees, landscaping and upgrades to the carpark. Note: the existing unfenced dog off-leash area will be retained.

Further Stages will occur next financial year (subject to budget) and will include a second fenced off-leash dog area. Once the second fenced area is constructed, this will then allow for the separation of small and large dogs, similar to that at Acacia Avenue, Lambton fenced off-leash area.

Appendix I – Draft Concept Plan



Site Plan N.T.S.



Existing Maryland dog off-leash area.

City of Newcastle adopted the Dogs In Open Space Plan in 2019.

The recommendation for Maryland Dog Park: Establish a fenced dog park that is designed to allow for the Maryland Creek realignment. Undertake site enhancements including increased trees, seating, shelter and a circulation pathway. The dog park is ideally around 0.9ha.

Refer to SK2 for Maryland Dog Park Concept.



Proposed seat table



Proposed sandstone garden bed and informal seats



Proposed shelter

MARYLAND DOG PARK

LOCATION PLAN

15 Nov 2022 SK1 - Revision 1

DRAFT



City of
Newcastle



MARYLAND DOG PARK

CONCEPT PLAN

15 Nov 2022 SK2 - Revision 1

DRAFT



City of
Newcastle



MARYLAND DOG PARK

STAGING PLAN

15 Nov 2022 SK3 - Revision 1


DRAFT



City of
Newcastle

Appendix II – Promotional materials


Have your say webpage


Select Language

HAVE YOUR SAY

Maryland Fenced Off-Leash Dog Park

Have your say on the proposed staged upgrades at Maryland Drive Reserve which include the provision of two separate fully fenced dog parks for small and large dogs, along with improved amenities, access, new trees and landscaping.



Proposed Maryland Fenced Off-Leash Dog Park

The Dogs in Open Space Plan (2019) identified the need to enhance existing off-leash areas and investigate potential opportunities for fenced dog areas within the Newcastle LGA.

The Dogs in Open Space Plan specifically recommended investigating the potential to integrate a fenced off-leash area at Maryland Drive Reserve as part of the Maryland Creek realignment design.

Draft plans include the provision of two separate fully fenced dog parks for small and large dogs along with improved amenities, access, new trees and landscaping.

Construction will be undertaken in 3 stages. Stage 1 works involves creating one fenced area open to all dogs and is estimated to be completed by mid-2023.

The existing off-leash area will remain open and off-leash until all stages are complete. Naturalisation of Maryland Creek has been taken into consideration with the design of the dog park.

Have Your Say

Have your say on the proposed Maryland Fenced Off-Leash Dog Park. The draft plan is on public exhibition until 5pm **Friday 16 December 2022**.


Important documents

[Draft Maryland Fenced Off-Leash Dog Park Concept Plan \(PDF\)](#)

Supporting documents

[Maryland Fenced Off-Leash Dog Park FAQs](#)

[Dogs in Open Space Plan \(2019\)](#)



Your Details

First name:

Last name:

Email:

Suburb:

Postcode:

Contact us

Engagement team
 Phone: 02 4974 2000
 Email: engage@ncc.nsw.gov.au

Your Say

Please provide your comments on the Draft Concept Plan for Maryland Fenced Off-Leash Dog Park:

If you have any further feedback or attachments, please upload here (Word or PDF):

No file chosen

Flyer and onsite signage



Social media

City of Newcastle
Published by Brandwatch · 29 November 2022 · 🌐

🐕 Plans have been unveiled for a new fenced off-leash dog park in Maryland!

Equipped with sheltered tables, improved amenities, dog bubblers and extensive landscaping that will provide added comfort for pets, both small and large, and their owners.

The Maryland Dog Park forms part of the Dogs in Open Space Plan, which was adopted by us in 2019 to guide the provision, improvement and management of off-leash dog areas over the next 10 years. ... [See more](#)



Proposed Maryland fenced off leash dog park

👍 51 8 comments 10 shares

Newsletter

Maryland Fenced Off-Leash Dog Park

Have your say on the proposed staged upgrades at Maryland Drive Reserve which include the provision of two separate fully fenced dog parks for small and large dogs, along with improved amenities, access, new trees and landscaping.



Have your say until 5pm **Friday 16 December 2022.**

HAVE YOUR SAY

Media release


[Living](#)
[Community](#)
[Business](#)
[Development](#)
[Explore](#)
[Council](#)
[About Us](#)

[Careers](#)
[Contact Us](#)
[News and Updates](#)

[Latest News](#)

2021/2022 Annual Report

[City News](#)

[COVID-19 how we are responding](#)
[Local Centres Program](#)
[Priority Projects](#)
[Projects and Works](#)
[Your Newcastle](#)
[Road Closures](#)
[Public Notices](#)
[Emergencies](#)
[Media Centre](#)

[Forms and Publications](#)
[Our Responsibilities](#)
[Our Organisation](#)
[Our Commitment to Sustainability](#)

[About Us](#) / [News and Updates](#) / [Latest News](#) / [Dog lovers to head west with City of Newcastle unveiling plans for new fenced off-leash dog park](#)

Dog lovers to head west with City of Newcastle unveiling plans for new fenced off-leash dog park

29 Nov 2022

Listen

Share

Maryland will become home to the city's newest fenced off-leash dog park, with City of Newcastle unveiling a multi-stage masterplan featuring dedicated areas for both large and small canines.

The new facility will be located at Maryland Drive Reserve adjacent to the existing unfenced, leash-free area.



A concept design for the site, which is now on public exhibition for community feedback, incorporates two large, fenced areas that will provide separate spaces for different sized dogs to enjoy.

Shelters with tables, informal sandstone seating, dog bubblers and extensive landscaping including trees for shade, will provide added comfort for pets and their owners, while concrete pathways and a formalised car park with accessible parking will ensure the facility is suited to all dog-lovers.

Newcastle Lord Mayor Nuatali Nirmes said the project will be delivered in three stages, with the first fenced area and amenities expected to be complete by mid-2023.

"With more than 63,000 dogs registered in our city, we know Novocastrians are passionate about their canine companions and want spaces where their four-legged friends can safely exercise and mix with other pets," Cr Nirmes said.

"City of Newcastle is committed to providing a variety of off-leash options throughout Newcastle and has already delivered the city's first fully fenced off-leash dog park at Acacia Avenue Reserve, as well as upgrades to the existing popular area in Islington Park.

"This new project at Maryland will provide a premier facility for dog lovers in our western suburbs, which is sure to be incredibly popular with pet owners who already make the most of the unfenced off-leash area within this reserve."

The Maryland Dog Park forms part of the Dogs in Open Space Plan, which was adopted by City of Newcastle in 2019 to guide the provision, improvement and management of off-leash dog areas during the next 10 years.

Formalised off-leash dog areas enable people to take their dogs to a place where they can legally run free, exercise and socialise with other dogs. They also provide pet owners with a meeting place and an opportunity to connect with others in the community.

The Maryland Dog Park draft masterplan is on public exhibition until 5pm Friday 16 December, with further information and the ability for the community to have their say via City of Newcastle's [website](#).

Example media coverage

<https://newcastleweekly.com.au/new-fenced-off-leash-dog-park-for-maryland/>

HOME ► NEWS



Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes with councillors Elizabeth Adamczyk and Cleahna Richardson at the existing unfenced off-leash area at Maryland.

New fenced off-leash dog park for Maryland

ROD THOMPSON
NOVEMBER 30, 2022

SHARE



The western suburb of Maryland is set to become home to the region's newest fenced off-leash dog park.

City of Newcastle (CN) has unveiled a multi-stage masterplan, featuring dedicated areas for both large and small canines, at Maryland Drive Reserve.

The site's concept design, which is now on public exhibition for community feedback, incorporates two large, fenced areas that will provide separate spaces for different sized dogs to enjoy.

Council hopes to deliver the first step of the project by mid-2023.

"With more than 63,000 dogs registered in our city, we know Novocastrians are passionate about their canine companions and want spaces where their four-legged friends can safely exercise and mix with other pets," Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes said.

"We're committed to providing a variety of off-leash options throughout Newcastle and have already delivered the city's first fully-fenced off-leash dog park at Acacia Avenue Reserve, as well as upgrades to the existing popular area in Islington Park."

Shelters with tables, informal sandstone seating, canine bubblers and extensive landscaping including trees for shade, will provide added comfort for pets and their owners, while concrete pathways and a formalised car park with accessible parking will ensure the facility is suited to everyone.

The Maryland Dog Park forms part of the Dogs in Open Space Plan, which was adopted by CN in 2019 to guide the provision, improvement and management of off-leash dog areas during the next 10 years.

"Formalised off-leash dog areas enable people to take their dogs to a place where they can legally run free, exercise and socialise with other dogs," Cr Nelmes said.

"They also provide pet owners with a meeting place and an opportunity to connect with others in the community."

Residents can have their say on the Maryland Dog Park draft masterplan until 5pm on Friday 16 December.

Appendix III – Submissions

I'm hoping as part of this plan there will be improvements to the levelling / drainage in the proposed large dog area as this area gets very muddy when we have wet weather and renders this part of the park unusable. I would also like to see more than one water bubbler installed in each area.
I support this off leash dog area as I have dogs myself and always drive to Speers Point instead! This will be so convenient and it's a great idea having one area for small dogs and one for large dogs! I hope this goes ahead.
It looks fantastic and I can't wait to use it. A street across the road, Bernborough Avenue, has public playground equipment so it would make the location very good for families as it would cater to dogs and children. There is also plenty of parking spaces on the road so, with the proposed car park, there will be ample room. I would hope the drainage issues would be addressed also as the entire area goes underwater very easily whenever it rains.
This looks like a fantastic place for dogs to run safely
As a dog owner this a lovely idea. You have my say
<p>Whilst I'm all for a (a in being one only) fenced off leash free area for dogs that their owners cannot control, I do not want the two fenced off leash free areas as per draft.</p> <p>I have taken my dogs down to the current area for many years, using a bouncy ball and tennis racket smashing the ball as hard as I can of which my previous dog, and my current dog (a Kelpie) she can run as far as she can, and all around without any issues, she loves it.</p> <p>The biggest issue we've had, is people who do not control their dogs when off leash, allowing them to come up to my dog when all she wants to do is play with her ball. She doesn't care less about other dogs,...until they get in her face and naturally she feels threatened. More often than not a quick snap in the face of the other dog, the other dog gets the message and backs off. I have found so many people just let their dogs get in the face of other dogs, and that's when we have issues.</p> <p>Allowing a heap of dogs, to enter a fenced off area is like letting a fox into a chook run. Let one aggressive dog in there, it's game on. I for one DO NOT WANT my dog to be put in that situation. At present, 90% of the time she sees the danger and runs back to my ute and gets in. If she was fenced in, like the other dogs, there is no escape.</p> <p>It sets a dangerous precedent in my opinion.</p> <p>Sure, have one fenced off area (probably on the Northern end of the draft area) that will be great for all the lap dogs who may run away from their owners and feel safe in that enclosed environment. But please, allow for a leash free non-fenced area also, ideally on the Southern side of the proposal, for dogs like mine.</p> <p>I should add, it is VERY RARE that I see anyone using the area that I use with my dog, on the other side yes that's where most seem to go.</p> <p>Please, just ONE fenced off area, not two.</p>
Looks good and will be used by many dog owners and their dogs
I love this plan. Will make great use of the space
Loving the designs so far, only change would be to enlarge the carpark space between the separate areas. Lambton is quite crowded and popular, as I imagine this will be. With the addition of the new housing estates going in towards Minmi, the area will become even more crowded so a little expansion of the carpark area will allow for the increase in popularity and population

<p>Hi, I am loving this! I've got some feedback, especially based on the fact we are getting a couple new housing estates + woolies put in. I'm assuming the traffic is going to get worse along this road.</p> <p>1 - Road access: Please widen the turn in and out of the dog park. It's currently very narrow and makes exiting hard, especially with cars parked either side on the road.</p> <p>2 - Parking: I don't know if there's adequate parking. The small dog zone is the same size as the area for large dogs - could this space be minimised slightly for more parking? This could be done either from the middle (current zone for parking) or across the top section that's facing the road.</p> <p>Adding more parks to the top section facing the road would also help cars entering & exiting and probably help with overall visibility.</p> <p>3 - Lighting: I know there are time zones around off leash areas (why is this?) but in winter it's dark by 4pm and the parks can be pitch black and feel unsafe. Also taking your dog during quieter hours reduces the risk of dog fights. Is there any chance of getting street / security lights installed?</p> <p>The rest are general suggestions / nice to haves:</p> <p>3 - Would it be possible to also add some training facilities similar to Islington dog park? (ramp, weaving poles etc)</p> <p>4 - Could we also have a toy box installed where people can donate dog toys like tennis balls etc.? Usually they either wind up littered all over the ground, or people make their own DIY donation boxes.</p> <p>5 - At all the dog parks, would it be possible to get donation boxes installed for DRN / RSPCA? That's probably way outside the scope of this plan, but thought I'd mention it while I'm here.</p> <p>Love your work,</p>
I feel the 1.5 high fence is too short for the larger dog area.
I love how some parks have a fenced off bit for the smaller dogs!! And dog obstacle course of cause
Looks fantastic! Please make it happen.
Please put cctv up to protect people from dogs attacking people or other dogs
Great idea.
<p>The current bin is constantly piled up with rubbish from annoying residents. Would be better to place the bins inside the fenced area so it's harder to dump?</p> <p>I think it needs at least one unisex toilet.</p>
Fence could be higher. Toilet and wash basin for the humans. A few agility stations for both large and small dogs. Tunnel, weave poles, up and over (bridge), jumps.
I think it's a great idea, I just hope whoever dumps their rubbish at the garbage bin there doesn't ruin it, needs cameras there
<p>This is a great idea and will provide some much needed use of a very boring space. Unfortunately these fields constantly flood with any sort of rain and become unusable for weeks!! More investment is needed for not only better drainage but also keeping the grass at a decent level to be usable. In addition the current bin there is constantly used as rubbish tip and either needs to be removed and/or emptied more regularly. Thanks hope this helps 😊</p>
Yes please, this looks fantastic and is much needed for the area. Would be so nice to have a dog park close by

<p>I don't believe in this current economic environment with interest rate hikes, housing rent increase and the general increase of cost of living that "we" should chose as a "priority" to upgrade yet more open spaces for dogs in the City of Newcastle Local Government Areas. And might I add what facility will you suggest for feline owners and other animals? Is this not a form of discrimination of pet choices?</p> <p>I could not locate the financial costings for this proposed development and I suspect that we are not being made aware of the financial burden that we will be subject to.</p> <p>Surely the community has highlighted a stronger desire to provide housing, shelter, food and financial assistance for our disadvantaged HUMANS ? And it not what a disgrace.</p> <p>I see this as a disgraceful use of our local government funds and I do not support this allocation at all.</p>
<p>This is a great idea. Newcastle needs more of these. Especially fenced ones!</p>
<p>Just dividing the park by large and small dogs is not safe or practical. Many larger but finely built dogs cannot safely play with more solid dog breeds that may be smaller. I have also witnessed a number of falls caused by people being knocked over by the heavier breeds (accidentally) running into them. A small staffy for example can weigh 40kgs while my larger Tamaruke weighs 18kgs. It's important to allow gentle and well behaved larger dogs to access the usually safer "small dog" area. At Lambton Dog park the large dogs side is now unsafe and a dumping ground for out of control dogs. The dog park (on each side) should have a circular track (cement) so dog owners can keep moving which reduces dog aggression. Having an accessible pathway is very important for people with disabilities like me who have balance issues. It's a good idea in general to have somewhere to walk when the ground gets too muddy. It would be good to have some fixed agility gear for training our dogs too.</p>
<p>Can you please put in agility equipment for dogs. Garbage bins. Security cameras for safety. Low level Lighting for use after sunset (not flood lights) leave the lovely trees. Fenced area for nervous dogs. Large dog area. Please put a list of dogs permitted to enter any small dog area - to avoid human aggression. Limit seating as it is a dog park and some owners sit down and do not watch the dog. Plants that offer different smells for dogs to sniff (with a pee protection fence)</p>
<p>Less seating and add some agility equipment for dogs to use. A small area for nervous dogs. Lots of hardy plants for dogs to smell (potentially small chicken wire around to stop peeing on them) tunnel for them to run through (old large pipe grassed over the top off) smaller area for small dogs as they aren't very active even the one at Lambton small dog area, they stick to the owners that sit in the seats.)</p>
<p>I fully support the proposal for a fully fenced dog park.</p> <p>I recommend lots of shade as the current dog park in North Lambton can get quite hot for dogs and owners especially in summer</p>
<p>Could you please provide an area for larger dogs 🐕 I have 3 German shepherds that most people fear and I always get abused as when they do bark it is loud obviously which scares old people.... It would be great to have a seperate area for large & small dogs furthest end away from the road</p>
<p>My concern is after heavy rain and overuse the area willl becomes very muddy. I would never use the dog park if I had to put a muddy dog back in the car. Some kind of drainage needs to be addressed for the proposed area.</p>
<p>Don't mind seeing our animals happy, just as long as it's in the right area. This plan looks Ok, just wondering if the neighbors feel this way also? At times I feel there are more spaces available for our animals then for us as people, especially cultural meeting places</p>
<p>Cannot wait</p>
<p>I have concerns about the height of the boundary fence that is to surround the off lead dog park. Maryland Drive is a very busy thoroughfare and a large dog would easily leap the proposed fence. Another issue is the lack of toilet facilities and the proposed park.</p>
<p>I'd love to see this become a fenced area. Open off-leash spaces make me uncomfortable as I dislike large dogs, and there have been times my kids and I have been walking or scooting along the pathway at Maryland Drive and had unleashed dogs approach us. This is a great space to turn into a fenced dog area.</p>

I would be very interested if you could include a DIY dogwash facility as attached. It can be solar powered. This could provide council income for further dogpark developments.
Yes please this is a wonderful idea
Separate fenced Off-Leash parks for small and large provide a wonderful healthy opportunity for community interactions and inclusion.
THAT IS GREAT
My question to you is, there is a stormwater discharge outlet on the northern end of the park, which discharges from Archer Crs to the Wetlands area. My understanding is that it is the Council's responsibility to maintain this. Looking at your proposed plan there appears to be no access to clean this outlet on a regular maintenance program to prevent rubbish and other streel litter from entering the wetlands. Will this be considered within the plan? Noting that the last time Council crews were cleaning stormwater channels in the park (some 12 months ago) they did not know that the outlet existed. This may explain why it has only been clean twice in the twenty-five-plus years that I have been living in the area. The outlet runs along the property line between X and X Archer Crs.
Great idea need more fenced places
I think it is best if there is two seperate areas one for the big dogs and one for smaller dogs and it would be awesome if there was also an area that people with dog reactive dogs could take their dogs and let them run around off lead on their own. Only one dog at a time type of thing because there are a lot of dogs at no fault of their own who are dog reactive from either being abused or something that's happened to them and they can't be near other dogs so I think a seperate small area for those dogs would be really helpful. I know a few people who have dogs like this and it is near impossible to walk them without coming across other dogs off lead at parks ect
It looks great and it's closer to home. I can't wait and neither can my dogs.
Having 2 seperate areas makes me feel much safer as I have 2 small dogs. We currently go to the Acicia Road dog park for that reason
Hi. The dog park if fully supported and a great community asset to the area. Would be great to see a few dog agility obstacles with the park as well. there is an existing public bin located along Maryland drive near adjacent to the proposed park which just becomes a dumping ground for people dropping off Houshold waste, could this please be looked at removing and a more suitable bin solution for small litter use only.
hi. great idea. An amendmaent is required. Toilets and 1.5 metres increase in surface height is required as this is an often flood zone that will destroy the forementioned work on a twice a year basis.
Can there be a bin for dog poo
I love the idea of a fenced area for dogs in Maryland as it's just an ok space for them right now. It would be great to see some sort of sensory garden for the dogs or some rocks and water garden they can play in. I have seen something like this in the Lake Macquarie LGA and the dogs love to be able to run around into "different zones". And perhaps a sensory garden to include some plants like, chamomile, lavender and rosemary.. these plants are calming for dogs and would be a great sniffing break for them :) But all in all, love the plan!
As a dog owner I really like the look of this plan. Not only would this allow a great area for pets to gather, play and exercise, it is also a great social space for dog owners.
May be impossible however if there could be some sort of water like a pool incorporated for the hot summer days. I have 4 dogs that go there all the time and they love swimming in the little puddles.

Existing off leash area: The concept plan shows legend item 15 which suggests the 'existing unfenced dog off leash' is to be removed. However, the FAQ document indicates this will be retained. Please confirm if unfenced dog off leash will be removed?

Noise: Will there be operating hours for this facility? How will noise from dogs barking be managed in early morning periods? Noted that owners can currently access the area anytime, however it will be a large intensification of noise emissions from barking dogs from what is currently experienced. The area is used very minimally for off-leash dogs currently.

Flooding: What flood assessment has been carried out? The proposed off leash dog park is a flood prone area and fills up in heavy rainfall. My property is severely impacted by flooding, my paddock went at least 1 metre underwater during the rainfall events in July 2022. I am concerned that changes and development in the proposed off leash dog area will exacerbate the flooding I experience at my property.

Cumulative flooding impacts: The City of Newcastle has identified in their Strategic Sports Plan a proposed future multi sports complex at the Wallsend New Lambton Pony Club ground on Creek Road. This proposed future project, the proposed fenced off leash dog park and the Maryland Creek Rehabilitation Project has the potential to change flood behaviour in this location. How are cumulative impacts being managed to not exacerbate downstream impacts to other residents?

Amenity: The area shown in the concept plan as item 9 is a notorious illegal dumping location. The public bin that was located at approximately the location of legend item 21 has recently been removed and this was also treated as an illegal dumping location by the community. How will waste be managed – what bin facilities will be provided? Particularly if the existing unfenced off leash dog park is retained, there will be no bin facilities for those users as the concept plan indicates the bins will be in the air locks to the dog yards.

Traffic: What traffic assessment has been carried out? There is no dedicated right-hand turning lane for vehicles travelling northbound on Maryland Drive and as such, vehicles will have to queue in the through lane and hold up traffic while they wait to turn right into the dog park. Noted that vehicles can and do turn right from the northbound lane, however it will be a large intensification of the number of vehicles accessing the dog park from what is currently experienced.

Accessibility: Will the driveway access to the dog park meet the design requirements for accessibility (grade, surface type) – or will its design preclude some groups of people such as those with disability or prams from accessing the dog park from Maryland Drive via active transport?

Will the boardwalk shown as legend item 11 in the concept plan be accessible for people with disability, given disabled parking spaces are being provided.

It would be helpful and more transparent if the environmental assessment documents were made publicly available to view.

Please do build a fully-fenced, off-leash small dog park at Maryland! I have to travel quite far to safely let my small dog play in the fenced North Lambton small dog park - it would be really awesome to have a local park, and lots of our neighbours with small dogs are in agreement. Thank you!

more trees to screen the industries. dogs love trees. the fence sounds a great idea - except when it floods there, then it will catch a heap of debris. also when you plant trees you need to water them, regularly, not watch them die and become like bonsai through no growth. area needs to be regularly mowed. we live right next to the park. dumping of rubbish is a major issue as well. needs to be regularly maintained and cleaned including areas along boundaries between residents and dog park