

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT



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Dog Off Leash Trial

1. About the Project

At the Local Government Meeting on 15 December 2022, Council endorsed the below locations to become Dog Off Leash Trial Areas (DOLA) based on the feedback and concerns provided by the community during engagement. The locations that are proceeding for a trial of up to three months period are:

- Boustead Park, Kurrimine Beach;
- Wildsoet Park, Tully;
- Coral Sea Park, North of shared path termination to Coral Sea Drive, Cardwell;
- Foreshore, Mission Beach between Miter Street and Pacific Parade – Esplanade access;
- Foreshore, South Mission Beach between Kennedy Esplanade boat ramp and the beach access 100m North of Jackey Jackey Street; and
- Wrights Park, Webb.

The trial will commence on Monday 30 January 2023.

Wrights Park, Webb has been adopted as a Dog Off Leash trial site (subject to community engagement outcomes) and Council has sought feedback from nearby residents of the area. Community feedback will be considered prior to the commencement of the trial period to determine if Wrights Park proceeds as a trial site.

Why is Wrights Park being considered for the trial?

Wrights Park, Webb was endorsed at the December 2022 Local Government Meeting as a trial location based on community feedback. Feedback included the following points: proximity away from neighbouring properties; an opportunity to increase patronage of a currently underutilised area; and facilities that are already in place, such as toilets and parking. However, consultation was planned with residents who reside near the park prior to the trial period commencing and this feedback will be considered in determining if Wrights Park proceeds as a trial site.

2. Introduction – Community Engagement

Effective community engagement is a contribution process that is the foundation for genuine community development. This process allows our community to voice their support, concerns, and identify the appropriate responses and solutions to the issues that affect them.

The Cassowary Coast region is diverse and includes people of different backgrounds, needs, values and expectations. Inclusive community engagement has been identified as a priority of Council to ensure all residents have an opportunity to have their voice heard.

The Dog Off Leash Area Trial (DOLA) has been identified as a topic of interest for the community and Council provided an opportunity for community members to provide feedback on the trial and proposed locations.

During the original round of consultation, 467 residents, community groups and Cassowary Coast visitors joined the conversation on the region's DOLA trial.

Overall, the survey showed positive sentiment, with 72% of respondents in favour of the proposed DOLAs or would support the DOLA trial with further facilities in place or alternate locations.

Wrights Park, Webb Consultation

The Wrights Park consultation commenced Wednesday 21 December 2022 and concluded on Sunday 22 January 2023, which generated feedback with 22 contributions from 21 contributors. Respondent submissions were received by Council via the Have Your Say website.

Council acknowledges and thanks all contributors for the time taken to provide feedback on this matter.

The consultation process was supported by media release, letterbox drop to residents near Wrights Park, paid social media targeted ads on Facebook and Instagram, social media campaign run via Council's Facebook page, corflute signage and advertising in Council's fortnightly Community Connect.

This report identifies and captures all feedback associated with the consultation and serves as a public document to close the loop on the engagement process. The findings contained herein are presented in their entirety and draw no conclusions or recommendations on project or strategy outcomes going forward.

Community Consultation Outcomes

It is noted that the DOLA trial can be an emotive topic with responses both in support for the trial and against.

Key findings that Council received from this consultation were:

- Consideration for extra facilities in Wrights Park;
- Management of the area to reduce impact for nearby residents and existing park use;
- Support for the trial; and
- Support for alternate locations.

Your Say – Key Findings

The Your Say survey included seven questions.

Respondents who live near Wrights Park

Of the 15 respondents who indicated that they lived within one kilometre of Wrights Park only three indicated that they were not in support of the DOLA trial across the Cassowary Coast region. The rest indicated that they were in support.

When asked if they supported the DOLA trial at Wrights Park, five indicated that they were not in support. Ten indicated that they were in support.

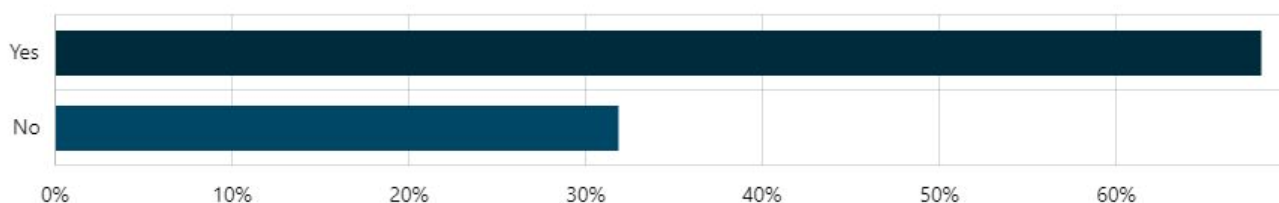
The nearby residents who were against the Wrights Park trial answered that they were against the trial due to lack of fencing, impacts to children living nearby, noise issues, existing sporting field activities, people not picking up after their dog and no facilities to dispose of waste. The issue of people driving onto the field was also raised by a respondent.

It's important to note that a number of respondents who indicated that they live within one kilometre of Wrights Park actually reside further away.

Question One:

Do you reside within one kilometre of Wrights Park, Webb?

15 respondents indicated that they lived near Wright Park.



Question Two: What suburb do you reside in?

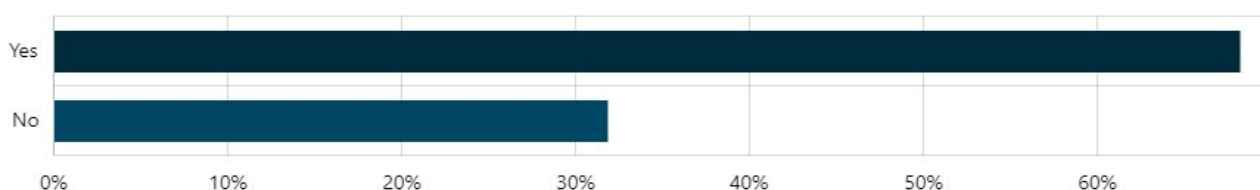
20 respondents answered this question.

Response areas are as follows:

- Webb- four respondents.
- East Innisfail- seven respondents.
- Innisfail Estate- two respondents.
- Belvedere- one respondent.
- Carmoo- one respondent.
- Coconuts- one respondent.
- Cullinanne- one respondent.
- Innisfail town centre- one respondent.
- Tordinda- one respondent.
- South Mission Beach- one respondent.

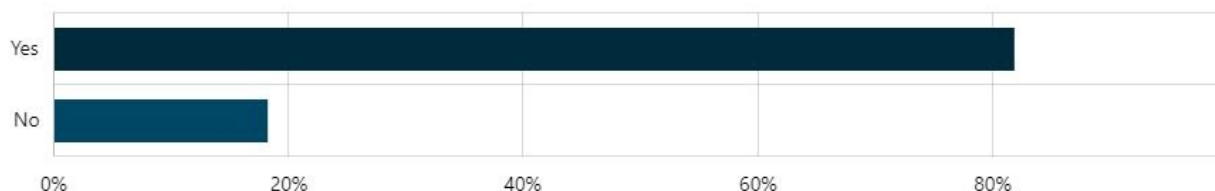
Question Three: Do you own a dog?

Of the 22 respondents who answered this question, 15 indicated that they own a dog.



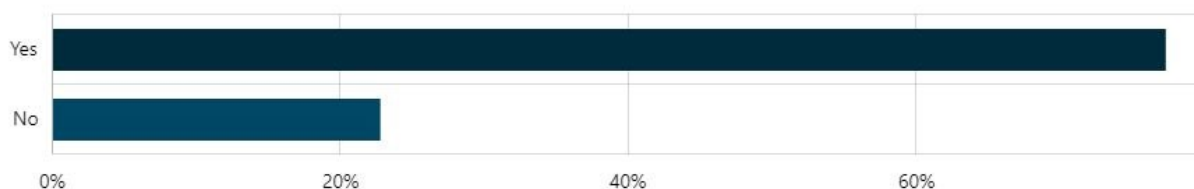
Question Four: Do you support the trial Dog Off Leash sites within the Cassowary Coast region?

81.82% (18 respondents) said they supported the DOLA trial. 18.18% (4) responded that they did not support the trial.



Question Five: Do you support the (up to) three-month Dog Off Leash trial at Wrights Park?

77.27% (17 respondents) said that they were in support of the Wrights Park trial. 22.73% (5) responded that they were not in support.



Question Six: Why have you provided the above response/s?

21 respondents answered this question with eight responses of a positive sentiment, nine mixed sentiment and four of negative sentiment.

The mixed sentiment has identified that they would be in support of the trial with a fenced area and further facilities, such as bins and dog waste bags provided. There was commentary on the current use of the park being impacted, impacts to nearby residents, dogs approaching the road and creating a safety issue and current behaviours of park users driving onto the grass.

Notable comments:

- *A safe and enclosed area for dogs is a brilliant idea. I have lived in Brisbane suburbs that have them and have visited similar areas interstate. They are a worthy investment for a community dog owners.*
- *It would be great to have a (sic) off leash park, dogs don't have anywhere to play, especially people on holidays with dogs.*
- *A trial is definitely needed (sic) as this would be a great asset as long as it is well cared for and has appropriate rules.*
- *There is a desperate need for the dog park. However plastic dog poop bags and a bin must be provided as they are in Cairns for this to work for everybody.*

Question Seven: Do you have further feedback?

12 respondents provided further commentary. Key themes throughout the commentary indicated that extra facilities were needed for the off leash areas. This included requests for seating, fencing, bins, dog waste bags shaded areas and drinking water.

Notable comments:

- *I've just moved to the (sic) Mission Beach area and was surprised that there are no dog parks, there are dog parks everywhere except here, but believe dog parks would be better fenced for security. Lots of visitors come to this area with their dogs, dog fenced parks would be a great addition to the area*
- *Off leash area in Innisfail Estate would be far more useful as there are dozens of dogs walking on leash there already.*
- *I'm concerned about fencing and attack issues as there have been attacks in the past with roaming dogs. I'm concerned about fencing because people don't always follow the speed limit in residential streets and I've lost dogs to being hit before.*
- *We disagree off lease dog areas (sic) if the AREAS are not properly fenced as they are in Cairns.*

Next Steps

The Community Engagement report will reach key internal and external stakeholders and will be available on Council's Your Say website. Project updates will be provided at key intervals, such as at commencement of trial, to identified key stakeholders and project registered email addresses.

Key insights were identified and summarised in this report. From these insights Cassowary Coast Regional Council could consider and implement recommendations and identify next steps for implementation of the DOLA trial, how they engage with stakeholders and the topics which require further attention.

Acknowledgement

This document has been prepared by Cassowary Coast Regional Council – Communications Team. All information presented in this report has been presented in an accurate and unbiased manner and makes no recommendation on any project actions going forward. This report has been approved by the Chief Executive Officer. For further information, please contact Council at 1300 763 903 or email enquiries@cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au.

Appendix: Feedback

Please note that provided emails from the Your Say website and IP addresses have been removed from the attached spreadsheet.



20230124_Wrights
Park survey responses

