

ITEM 3 STANWELL PARK BEACH DOG CONTROL AREAS CONSULTATION

This report summarises the community and agency feedback with respect the recent consultation regarding possible changes to the Stanwell Park Beach dog off-leash area. Community and agency support is for the retention of the existing dog off-leash area. The report also clarifies tenure and management issues for a small section of beach to the north of the existing dog off-leash area.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 The declared off-leash dog area at Stanwell Park Beach be retained at the northern end of the beach.
- 2 The existing off-leash dog area at Stanwell Park Beach be extended north by declaring the small northern most section of the sandy beach as a dog off-leash area in accordance with Section 13.6 of the Companion Animals Act 1998.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Danny Madigan, Manager Regulation and Enforcement
Authorised by: Linda Davis, Director Planning + Environment - Future City + Neighbourhoods

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Stanwell Park Beach Dogs Off-Leash Access Engagement Report
- 2 Engagement Flyer

BACKGROUND

Council at its meeting on 22 July 2019 resolved to adopt the revised Dogs on Beaches and Parks Policy including the declaration of an off-leash dog park at Reed Park Dapto, the declaration of public bathing areas where dogs are prohibited at all flagged and lifeguard patrolled areas, and a subsequent report back to Council after the 2020 swimming season on the implementation of the revised Policy.

In addition, with regard to Stanwell Park Beach, Council resolved that -

“Specific community engagement and consultation be undertaken to seek feedback on possible changes to the Stanwell Park off-leash area to reduce confusion experienced by some beach users, with a subsequent report to be provided to Council. This shall include –

- a Consideration of moving the current off-leash dog area to the Southern end of Stanwell Park beach, rather than the Northern end, in response to the changing usage patterns of beach goers and the location of flagged/patrolled areas over the past number of years*
- b Direct mail-out of the proposal to all residents in Stanwell Park seeking their feedback, along with the on-site targeting of beach users, and the utilisation of Council’s Engagement HQ to allow for the wider Wollongong community to provide feedback on line*
- c Commencement of engagement as soon as possible with a period of 28 days for feedback.”*

The current declared dog off-leash area was established in 2010 and is located at the northern end of the beach. There are issues with the existing dog off-leash area relating to potential conflict with other beach users arising from general increased patronage of the beach, from park reserve overflow, from changes in the location of the lifeguard patrolled areas and from hang glider and paraglider landings to the south of the off-leash area.

PROPOSAL

The community, stakeholder and NSW Government agency comments in response to the engagement and consultation support the retention of the declared dog off-leash area at Stanwell Park Beach at the northern end of the beach.

The engagement also highlighted the need to clarify the northern boundary of the existing declared dog off-leash area. A small section of beach (approximately 40 metres in width) is located north of the current boundary of the declared area. This small section of beach is owned and managed by the Crown. It is a public place under the Companion Animals Act 1998 (Section 13.6) and can be included in the declared dog off-leash area. The small section of beach can from time to time be devoid of sand. The report proposes the extension of the declared dog off-leash area north of the current boundary of the area (The Drive Stanwell Park) to include this small section of sandy beach through to the northern most rocks.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

The consultation and engagement regarding the proposal for Stanwell Park Beach ran from 9 August 2019 to 9 September 2019. A direct mail out to 949 households (residents and owners) in Stanwell Park and Stanwell Tops including a letter, feedback form and reply-paid envelope was utilised (refer to Attachment 2). In addition, signage about the proposal was erected along the beach adjacent to access-ways and at the Railway Station as well as in businesses in Stanwell Park.

Engagement and consultation also occurred with Surf Life Saving Illawarra, the Helensburgh Stanwell Park Surf Life Saving Club, Neighbourhood Forum 1, Aboriginal Groups, Stanwell Park Arts Theatre and the Stanwell Park Public School.

A total of 295 submissions were received during the exhibition by either the 'Have Your Say' website, via email, direct correspondence or the feedback form. The community engagement report is attached (Attachment 1).

Specific consultation regarding the proposal was also undertaken with relevant NSW Government agencies.

Community Comment

A total of 295 community submissions/comments were received of which 185 (62.72%) provided rationale for maintaining the dog off-leash location at the northern end of the beach. 91 submissions (30.84%) provided rationale for moving the dog off-leash area to the southern end of the beach. 11 submissions (3.73%) presented reasons why dogs should be prohibited on Stanwell Park Beach and 8 submissions (2.71%) recommended that dogs should have access to all areas of the beach but at restricted times only.

General feedback regarding the proposal was received across a number of common themes including the surf club, nippers and flag location, access and safety, environmental constraints, parking and the impacts on residents as well as general compliance and enforcement issues.

Community submissions received presented rationales across each of these themes that supported the retention of the dog off-leash area at the northern end of the beach, but also as reasons to support the re-location of the off-leash area to the southern end of the beach. The comments received across these themes identified issues with dog management at Stanwell Park Beach but indicated that the preferred area for the dog off-leash area remains at the northern end of the beach.

In addition, there were a small number of submissions that were not in support of either option suggesting that due to the overall activities on the beach that there should be no access for dogs or only access for dogs on leash at restricted times.

General comments were made seeking improvements in sign posting and community education regarding responsibilities of dog owners as well as seeking improved compliance and enforcement activities. These general comments were also consistent themes in the broader community engagement regarding the Dogs on Beach and Parks Policy that was considered by Council in July 2019. Improvements across these areas of general concern have been programmed and are being implemented at Stanwell Park and across the City.

A report detailing the implementation of the Dogs on Beaches and Parks Policy including compliance and education measures, signage improvements and Ranger enforcement activities is scheduled for Council's consideration after the summer 2020 swimming season.

Stakeholder Comment

Stakeholder submissions were received from Helensburgh-Stanwell Park Surf Life Saving Club and Surf Life Saving Illawarra. The Surf Club opposes the relocation of the dog off-leash area to the southern end of the beach on the following grounds.

1. Throughout the summer nippers' activities are conducted on the southern end of the beach each Sunday in the area where dogs would be off-leash under the proposal and could result in injury to young children.
2. The patrolled area of the beach is mostly at the southern end due to safer surf conditions. The northern end where the current dog off-leash area is located is not patrolled.
3. Many children use the southern end of the beach due to its safety record and proximity to the Surf Club and patrol members. Off-leash dogs pose a safety risk to such beach users.

Surf Life Saving Illawarra supports the retention of the dog off-leash area at the northern end of the beach. Their submissions raised the same concerns as the Surf Club but also highlighted, *"....the high visitation of park users at the northern lagoon on weekends would require substantial Ranger input to control (non-approved) movement of dogs from the northern area and carpark, along the beach to the proposed southern off-leash dog area."*

Government Agency Comment

Specific comment regarding the proposal was also sought from Government agencies and were received from the Department of Planning Industry and Environment (DPIE) and NSW Crown Lands. The submissions / comments received are summarised below.

DPIE – Environment (Coasts & Estuaries)

The Environment (Coasts and Estuaries) submission was not supportive of the proposal and advised that Stanwell Creek is an intermittently closed and open lake or lagoon (ICOLL) and is mapped as a 'Coastal Wetland' and 'Littoral Rainforest' under the NSW SEPP (Coastal Management) 2018. A map of the Stanwell Creek Coastal wetland is included below.



Map 1: Mapped Coastal Wetland and Buffer Zone.

Specific objectives for these mapped areas are established under the Coastal Management Act 2016 and are relevant to the proposed dog off-leash area. The intent of these objectives is to promote the

protection, conservation and sustainable use of coastal wetland environments. The proposal to relocate the dog off-leash area within the 'Coastal Wetland' or Littoral Rainforest' area would not be consistent with these objectives.

The proposed dog off-leash extends to the rock platform at the southern extent of the beach which provides habitat for threatened and migratory shorebirds and is located adjacent to dune vegetation. There is potential for off-leash dogs to cause harm to shorebirds and damage of dune vegetation within and adjacent to the proposed dog off-leash area. The proposed area is also a location that is highly accessed for recreational and social pursuits and surf lifesaving club activities. Relocating the off-leash area to the southern section of the beach area may result in conflict between user groups.

Coast and Estuaries recommend that Council consider initiatives that may assist with improving the existing restricted on-leash and off-leash access configuration. This may include community awareness raising, review of local signage and ensuring compliance with the Dogs on Beaches and Parks Policy through improved monitoring and regulation.

DPIE – Environment (Ecosystems)

Raised no objections to the proposal.

DPIE – Industry (Lands)

Raised no objection to the proposal but suggested the preferred location for the dog off-leash area is to the south as the majority of that area is under Council management.

DPIE – Industry (Fisheries)

Raised no objection to the proposal but does recommend that the established dog off-leash area include measures for dog owners to keep dogs away from the lagoon. Improvement of signage to this effect was suggested.

Matters for Consideration

The consultation and engagement process has highlighted a number of issues regarding the proposal.

Stanwell Park Beach is popular and very busy particularly during summer. As such there are many user groups on the beach including walkers, picnickers, beach users, hang gliders, surf life-saving and nippers, and dog owners accessing the dog off-leash area.

Council's patrolled bathing area moves along the beach dependent on tides, weather, sea and the predominant sand bank position. In the past, the mid to southern section of the beach near the Surf Life Saving Club provided better sand banks to establish a safe bathing area, but over the past summer the mid to north section of the beach was the safest area. The Dogs on Beaches and Parks Policy, adopted on 22 July 2019, declared all flagged and lifeguard patrolled areas as dog prohibited areas. Liaison with the lifeguards and signage to support this has been implemented.

The southern end of the beach has a number of environmental constraints. The rock platform and vegetation adjacent the lagoon provide shorebird habitat. Stanwell Creek entrance and lagoon at this end of the beach is also mapped as a 'coastal wetland' under the NSW (Coastal Management) SEPP 2018 and the Coastal Management Act 2016. Activities that have the potential to compromise the natural values of the wetland area around Stanwell Creek are contrary to the management objectives of the Act. Hargraves Creek at the northern end of the beach is not mapped under this legislation.

The topography of the current declared dog off-leash area at the northern end of the beach with the cliff and rocks to the west and north acts as a natural barrier and helps to contain dogs to that area. The southern end of the beach has residential properties on its boundary that may make it difficult to contain dogs to the area. There is a risk of potential entry onto the private land that adjoins the southern end of the beach.

Most coastal beaches, wetlands and lagoons have high potential for significance in regard Aboriginal heritage. Potential impacts are likely similar at both ends of the beach around Hargraves and Stanwell Creeks respectively. Reducing the impact of dogs on these important coastal areas is a general objective of the Dogs on Beaches and Parks Policy.

The engagement process also identified that a small section of the northern end of the beach (approximately 40 metres in width) is not declared or mapped as part of the existing dog off-leash area at Stanwell Park. This small section of beach reserve is owned and managed by the Crown. Legal advice has confirmed that under the Companion Animals Act 1998 this section of beach is a 'public place' and that Section 87 of that Act does bind the Crown to the provisions of the Act. On this basis Council is able to declare the area as a dog off-leash area as an addition to the currently declared dog off-leash section of the beach.

A Plan of Management (PoM) for this beach and reserve has been in place since 2009. Under the provisions of the Crown Land Management Act 2016 a new Plan of Management for the Reserve is required to be developed prior to 30 June 2021. The new PoM will reference any declared dog control areas that are in place at the time of adoption.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2028 Goal 1, "*We value and protect our environment*", and Goal 5, "*We have a healthy community in a liveable City*".

It specifically delivers on core business activities as detailed in the Regulatory Control Service Plan

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The consultation and engagement costs including postage, staff time, graphic design and promotional materials have been funded from existing budget.

CONCLUSION

Since the adoption of the Dogs on Beaches and Parks Policy in July 2019, measures aimed at improving compliance with the Policy have been developed and are being implemented. This includes signage particularly around the declared dog prohibited areas including the public swimming areas on beaches that are flagged and lifeguard patrolled, as well as the timed on-leash (Orange zones). Web based information and media material have also been developed. Promotional material and flyers regarding beach and park access for dogs generally have also been developed and distributed.

Following community and government agency engagement and consultation, a change to the Dogs on Beaches and Parks Policy in regards the location of the Stanwell Park Beach dog off-leash area is not supported. From the engagement and consultation process, it is apparent that although there are potential conflict issues with the existing dog off-leash area at the northern end of the beach, it remains the preferred option.

Usage patterns along the mid and southern section of the beach with the Surf Life Saving Club infrastructure and nippers activities, as well as the location of a mapped coastal wetland around Stanwell Creek and environmental constraints associated with it, support the retention of the existing dog off-leash area.

The northern end of the beach provides natural barriers to the declared off-leash area, with the southern end carrying risk due to the proximity of the residential properties, with some property boundaries also including small sections of the sandy beach.

In addition, a small area of the northern end of the beach (approximately 40 metres in length) that is under ownership and management by the Crown is currently located outside of the existing declared dog off-leash area. This area has been confirmed as a public space under the Companion Animal Act 1998 and should be included in the declared dog off-leash area. Minor mapping changes to the declared area would be required.



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Stanwell Park Beach Dogs Off-Leash Access

ENGAGEMENT REPORT

September 2019

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Executive Summary

Council asked the community to share their thoughts on a proposal to move the dog off-leash area on Stanwell Park beach from the current north side location to the south. The feedback received will be presented to Council to help inform the decision about the best option for a dog off-leash area on Stanwell Park beach.

Feedback was sought for a period of 28 days from Friday 9 August until 10 am Monday 9 September 2019. A direct mail out which included a letter, feedback form and replied paid envelop was sent to 949 residents and property owners in Stanwell Park and Stanwell Tops seeking their feedback. On-site targeting of beach users was undertaken through signs on the beach and station, as well as posters in businesses in Stanwell Park village. Residents could also provide feedback via Council's Engagement HQ website, email or phone.

Information was also sent to a range of community stakeholders including Aboriginal groups, Neighbourhood Forum 1, the Helensburgh Stanwell Park Lifesaving Club, Stanwell Park Arts Theatre and Stanwell Park Public School.

295 submissions were received which included 185 providing rationale for maintaining the current northern location and 91 submissions provided rationale for moving access to the south. 11 submissions presented reasons why there should be no dog off-leash areas and 8 submissions recommended dogs should have access to all areas of the beach at restricted times.

Comments in support of maintaining dog access to the northern end of the beach included its natural boundaries which contain the dogs and distance them from the surf club and associated activities such as nippers and carnivals. Other feedback stated that the south side was safer for swimming and this activity would be compromised by unleashed dogs. The environmental protection of the southern lagoon and endangered natural wildlife was a strong theme, as well as general safety of children swimming in the southern lagoon. Concerns were raised that dogs would access the private properties which are unfenced.

Comments in support of moving the area to the southern side included suggestions that the south end is less popular and provided a more appropriate space for dogs away from people, that the north is too busy with visitors, hang and para gliders and the location of the flags is often to the north of the beach. In addition, the kiosk, playground, park and car park attracted greater patronage in the north.

There was general feedback on dog behaviour, lack of control by owners, issues with dog waste and some dog owners not following off-leash rules.

There was feedback suggesting dogs be prohibited from the beach entirely and others wanted to allow dogs to access the entire beach at restricted times.

Background

The Dogs on Beaches and Parks Policy was reviewed following community engagement in late 2018. Several late submissions were received in early 2019 from residents of Stanwell Park requesting changes to the Stanwell Park off-leash beach area. The approved off-leash area at Stanwell Park Beach was established in 2010 and is located at the northern end of the beach. The submissions received raised issues with the existing off-leash area relating to conflict with other beach users. The submissions suggest that the issues have resulted from general increased patronage of the beach, park reserve overflow, the lifeguard patrolled area now being located more towards the northern end of the beach, and hang glider and paraglider landings just to the south of the off-leash area.

The revised Dogs on Beaches and Parks Policy was adopted by Council at its meeting on 22 July 2019. As part of this decision, Council resolved to undertake specific community engagement to seek feedback on the possible changes to the Stanwell Park off-leash area. The proposed change was intended to reduce confusion experienced by some beach users and in response to the changing usage patterns of beach goers and the location of flagged/ patrolled areas over the past number of years.

Council further resolved that the engagement would include a direct mail-out of the proposal to all residents in Stanwell Park seeking their feedback, along with the on-site targeting of beach users, and the utilisation of Council's Engagement HQ to allow for the wider Wollongong community to provide feedback online.

Methodology

Stakeholders were identified as residents, property owners, beach visitors, the Aboriginal community, the Helensburgh Stanwell Park Surf Lifesaving Club and Neighbourhood Forum 1.

A letter, feedback form and replied paid envelope was mailed to all residents and property owners in Stanwell Park and Stanwell Tops. Posters were distributed through Stanwell Park shops and the beach kiosk, signs were installed around the beach and at the station and emails sent to the Helensburgh Stanwell Park Surf Lifesaving Club, Stanwell Park School, Stanwell Park Arts Theatre and Neighbourhood Forum 1. Letters and emails were also sent to relevant Aboriginal Community groups. The proposal was placed on Councils Engagement HQ website with provision to provide feedback through an online survey.

Results

The following table outlines the methods in which the 295 submissions were returned

Submission Method	Number
Direct mail paper forms	162
Engagement HQ Survey	112
Email	21

Beach Crowding and Popularity

High utilisation rates were presented as a rationale for both options. Those supporting the off-leash area remaining in the north suggested the south end is highly utilised and those supporting moving access to the south suggested the north is highly utilised.

Those in support of maintaining the off-leash area in the north said that the southern end lagoon is wider, more family orientated and conducive to water activities such as nippers and swimming. It was suggested that the south is densely populated and that there is a variety of activities including board riding, picnics, swimming, beach fishing, photography and wedding groups using the southern area. There was a comment that dogs should be kept in the area that is least attractive to families and that a mums and bubs group meet at the south end. The north was identified as not being as good for surfers and not swimmable. Comments also suggested that the northern end is safer for dogs and people as it is less crowded.

Similar assertions were received from those in support of moving the off-leash area to the south end. Feedback presented that the southern end was quieter, safer and a more appropriate space for dogs with fewer day trippers, children, surfers, swimmers and sunbakers having unwanted interactions. Comments included explanations for why the south side doesn't attract the same crowds including its distance from the main park and playground, car park and kiosk and not being a flagged area due to dangerous swimming and surf conditions. Reasons against dogs remaining on the north suggested it was a much smaller and already congested area - with tourists, day trippers, bus groups, families, children, surfers, swimmers and that hang gliders 'flags and crowds are usually toward the middle/north'. It was also suggested that usage of the north area by dog walkers had 'increased significantly over the last few years due to limited access to dog beaches in the Sutherland Shire'.

There was a suggestion to put a dog park in Helensburgh to relieve stress on Stanwell Park beach.

Surf Club, Nippers and the Flags

There was contention about where the flags were usually located and which part of the beach was safer to swim in. There were a number of comments concerning the impact on weekend nippers, surf patrol and carnivals if the dog off-leash area was moved to the southern end. It was argued that it would become 'chaotic' with dogs running around and have a higher chance of bites and dogs swimming in flagged areas. It was also argued that the visibility and efficiency of surf live saving services would be

reduced and that people will swim away from flags to get away from dogs. Those in support of the north area argued the southern end of the beach is a place many children use because of its safety record, proximity to the surf club building and the patrol members.

Safety

One of the main concerns in submissions from both those for and against moving the off-leash area was that of safety and dangerous interactions between dogs and children. Examples were given of dogs biting, injuring or frightening children in the current northern off-leash area and fears were expressed about that same dog behaviour occurring if the off-leash area if it is moved to the south.

There was seen to be no risk to hang gliders on the north as they 'don't land where dogs are and that hang gliders use the park to pack up in'. Those in support of the south felt the north is 'too crowded with hang gliders and beach users to have dogs'.

There was feedback that related to safer pedestrians' access via the Drive and Station Street proposing more vehicles on the south will cause safety issues and be dangerous for pedestrians. It was also raised that a move to the proposed southern end will encourage car usage.

Benefits to dogs and dog owners

Some submissions presented the perceived benefits for dogs and their owners on the south side including that it has 'more sunlight' as the 'north end loses sun in the afternoon when most people walk dogs'; it is closer to the beach and that it has 'better access for council machinery to clean beach from dog droppings'. Better visibility on the south side was also given as a reason to have dogs there suggesting 'it is more visible from houses, the surf club and roads if I am walking my dog alone', and people 'can easily see who is using the southern area and the nature of their animals'.

Comments in support of the north suggested 'current arrangement gives separation between people and dogs, making the northern end the best option for the community to exercise their dogs and meet socially other dog owners in a safe area'. It was noted that if the location moved it would require the retraining of dogs.

Environment and Natural Boundaries

The physical boundaries of the northern end were identified as safer for dog off-leash area with comments that the 'north end is more compact and a more clearly defined zone from the inlet down to the left when approaching the beach, therefore easier for residents to keep dogs away from swimmers, visitors and sunbakers'. The boundaries created by the cliff, lagoon and hang glider area were identified as beneficial to a successful off-leash area.

Alternate views were presented, stating the physical boundaries meant dogs and people were forced into closer proximity with an increased risk of unwanted dog interactions and confrontations with dog owners.

The impassable cliff on the northern side was also raised as a benefit to achieving the Policy and that the southern side has no barriers in which to contain unleashed dogs. The lack of barriers on the south side

was identified as a negative by many. It was also presented that the high rock cliff gave more freedom for dogs where in the south 'dogs will run in the street, car parks and surf club'. The lagoon acts as a boundary, plenty of room away from houses and has easier access from park and parking areas. It was felt that dogs could be more easily monitored and controlled by owners, protected from road and cliffs and that the cliff acts as a noise barrier. There was a concern raised about barking dogs and that the north cliff provides a buffer.

Others stated that the wider area on the south would be more appropriate for dogs to play in and to provide more space between dogs and people.

Environmental concerns highlighted that the southern end is a natural bird breeding area and the negative impact dogs off-leash would have on the natural habitat. It was commented that there is a 'wading bird species on the south, foraging and nesting ICOLL area' and an off-leash area will 'create havoc with water birds in the lagoon'. The question was asked if a cultural heritage study had been done for impact on both areas and the need for a study on fauna and flora was identified. There were also environmental concerns raised about the area around the north lagoon suggesting 'grasses that support the edges of the lagoon are damaged by the track to beach' and that dogs are 'polluting the lagoon'.

Access

The south side was identified as the primary access to the beach by residents suggesting they 'have no other access to the south and would have to walk through the dog off-leash area'. The north was seen to have easier access for elderly dog owners. Some commented that having the dog off-leash on the south side would be more convenient for residents as there were 'more dog owners on the south side', that it would be 'more accessible on foot for residents' and that currently you 'need to walk around on the streets to access the dog beach'.

There was a concern that there are too many exits on the southern end with the north having one entry and exit point.

It was suggested that there is a lack of access to clean up after the dogs suggesting that 'tractor doesn't clean north end' and 'north hardly ever raked'. Other feedback contradicted this suggesting the 'north end is mechanically cleaned by Council but [there is] no access for machinery south side'.

The restricted access on the south end in periods of rain and flooding was also raised.

Impacts on Residents

There were several issues raised about the impact on residents if the dog off-leash area was moved to the south including increased noise for local residents and more cars, more traffic for Lower Coast road, dogs accessing private property which is unfenced due to high tides and storm surges.

It was also noted that 'as the owner of property that is part of the beach they do not give consent to allow dogs to use it'.

Parking

Feedback in support of the north stated that parking in the south area is already full due to current use by people accessing the surf club, café, reserve and picnic facilities and could not accommodate dog owners. Surf club events such as carnivals and nippers were described as attracting large numbers of people and the corresponding numbers of vehicles. Also, that parking availability on the north was easier to use and gave better access to the beach for people with dogs.

Feedback in support of the proposed move to the south suggested that there was not enough parking on the north end and that there was more parking availability on the south end. Respondents described that the north end parking was already full due to use by people, particularly tourists accessing the park and the kiosk.

Non Compliance and enforcement

There were concerns raised about people not following the rules such as not picking up dog poo, dogs being in flagged areas, not being controlled and not on-leash. It was also stated that people are letting dogs off-leash before the designated area and that this would be worse on south side.

There were questions and requests about regulations and signage such as 'what is stopping dogs going into yellow area?', 'need better signage and more frequent inspections', 'install signs regarding clean beach and dog supervision', 'increase ranger patrols' and 'more bins for poo'. Concerns were raised about the behaviour of dog owners who are currently non-compliant with regulations including not supervising their dogs, 'dogs swimming in north lagoon outside of dog area', ignoring the 'on-leash requirement from the car park to the beach area' as well as not picking up after their dogs.

Reason for change

A number of submissions questioned why the southern end was being proposed, it was felt the current location was working well, it is well established, sign posted and understood by all. Some concerns were also raised about whether there was evidence of the changes to usage patterns, confusion and the financial outlay without benefit. The expense to move dog infrastructure was also raised.

Not in support of either option

Whilst most submissions indicated a preference for the north or south there was also feedback that there should be no access for dogs or only access for dogs on a lead. Submissions stated that the proposed change was moving the problem from one end to the other. The issues described were that the whole beach is too busy with beach goers to accommodate dogs. Also, dogs were attacking wildlife, dog waste was a significant problem and dog owners were not in control of their dogs with many ignoring regulations. Safety and unwanted interaction with dogs were the primary concerns.

Other submissions supported allowing dogs access to all areas, suggesting that dogs can be in any location if they are properly controlled, dog waste is cleaned up by owners and problem dogs removed. Some submissions suggested dogs not in the flag area and restricted times for dogs off-leash.

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Stanwell Park Beach Dogs Off Leash Access

Feedback Form

We are considering moving the current off-leash dog area at Stanwell Park beach to the Southern end, rather than the Northern end of the beach. We want to know what the community thinks about the idea.

Let us know your thoughts before 10am Monday 9 September 2019

Current – northern end



Proposed – southern end



What is your preferred location for dog off leash area at Stanwell Park beach? *(please tick)*

Current - northern end

Proposed - southern end

Please explain why this is your preference

More overleaf...

Please return completed form to:

Email engagement@wollongong.nsw.gov.au
In person 41 Burelli Street Wollongong

Post Locked Bag 8821, Wollongong DC 2500

