

PORT PIRIE REGIONAL COUNCIL



DOG & CAT MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2029



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Approved by Dog and Cat Management Board:

9 July 2024

Date Plan comes into effect:

15 July 2024

Review Date:

15 July 2029

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & BACKGROUND

The Port Pirie Regional Council is situated approximately 230 kilometres from the Adelaide CBD and has a population base of 17,000. During 2022/2023 the Council registered 2990 dogs, impounded 77 dogs and over 300 cats. In addition, the Council investigated a number of dog attacks/harassments and noise complaints.

This Animal Management Plan has been prepared by the Port Pirie Regional Council (the Council) to provide a planned approach to undertaking its responsibilities pursuant to the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* and in line with the Council's Community Plan (2016-2025) for the provision of appropriate controls for Dog and Cat Management. The Animal Management Plan will guide dog and cat management by the Council over the next five years and has been prepared drawing information from a broad range of stakeholders.

The Plan identifies strategies and actions to implement the mission, aims and objectives for domestic dog and cat management, and relates these back to the wider policy context.

This Plan contains recommendations for a wide range of actions to be undertaken by the Council. These actions will enable Council to maintain a balance between competing interests and the management of domestic dogs and cats, to accommodate new requirements.

The Plan's mission is to continue to promote and facilitate responsible ownership of dogs and cats, and the benefits of animal companionship focusing on the legitimate needs of pets and their owners while respecting the rights of other members of the community and protecting the environment.

The Plan aims to:

- Continue to promote responsible dog and cat ownership;
- Ensure public safety and enhance the amenity and environment;
- Harness the benefits of dog and cat ownership; and
- Ensure that the expenditure of registration fees addresses domestic dog and cat issues.

The Dog and Cat Management Act was enacted in 1995 and brought in a legal framework to South Australia covering both dogs and cats. The objectives of the Act are to:

- Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership;
- Increase public safety and reduce environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats, and
- To promote the effective management of dogs and cats.

Animal control has encompassed a broader context following the introduction of the Act. Knowledge of both animal and human behaviour is now a requirement of working in the field.

There is growing recognition that enforcement of laws will not, on its own, result in lasting, voluntary changes in behaviour. It needs to be supplemented by a range of non-regulatory approaches such as public education and assistance in becoming compliant with the relevant legislation.

There is now considerable evidence to support our understanding of the benefits of owning pets. This implies a potential role for Council in harnessing the benefits of pet ownership or at least maintaining the ability of the community to continue to own dogs and cats. In this environment, it is essential that Council take a strategic approach to managing domestic dogs and cats. This strategy will provide Council with a sound basis and direction from which it can continue to plan, co-ordinate and make future decisions to meet the needs of the community over the next five years.

THE LAW/GUIDELINES

The legislative framework to be observed by Council's regarding the management of dogs and cats is provided by the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 and Dog and Cat Management Regulations 2017.

Council's Authorised Officers within the Development & Regulation team are responsible for administering the requirements of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*, with their delegation provided by the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate with approval of the Council. These Officers report to the Director, Development & Regulation.

The obligations delegated to Council's under the Dog and Cat Management Act that are of relevance to this plan are to:

Council Provisions	Dog and Cat Legislative Requirements
Maintain a register of dogs which is available for inspection by members of the public and appoint a suitable person to be registrar of dogs.	Maintain registrations within the database known as Dogs and Cats Online (DACO).
Employ at least one full-time authorised officer or make other appropriate arrangements.	Ensure the mandatory microchipping and desexing of dogs and cats. Some exemptions may apply.
Ensure satisfactory arrangements for the detention of dogs seized under this Act are met and may make such arrangements for cats seized under this Act.	Ensure all breeders of dogs and cats are registered with the Dog and Cat Management Board.

Councils may also make by-laws for the control and management of dogs or cats. Council currently has a Dog By-Law and a Cat By-Law.



REVENUE

Registration fees are reviewed annually by Council and are listed in Council's fees and charges register.

Revenue generated by registration fees under the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* must be utilised in the administration or enforcement of the provisions of this Act.

Council is obliged to provide funding to the Dog and Cat Management Board by way of a fixed percentage of the registration fees received as detailed in the Act. The Port Pirie Regional Council's percentage of registration fees paid to the Board is 12%. These funds are used by the Board to assist in the provision of the statewide registration database known as DACO, amongst other strategic activities such as:

- Promotion of responsible dog and cat ownership statewide;
- Legislative reviews; and
- Assisting with Council obligations in the administration of the Dog and Cat Management Act.



COUNCIL'S MANAGEMENT OF DOGS

Council's Authorised Officers are part of the Development & Regulation Department within the Port Pirie Regional Council and are responsible for animal management investigations relating to dogs and cats, providing education, advice, and assistance to the Community.

Registration of dogs

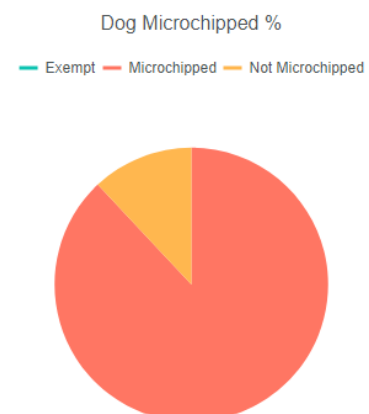
All dogs must be registered by 3 months of age, pursuant to Section 33 of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995. Registration is to be renewed annually at the start of each financial year. Discounts are offered with evidence provided for the below:

- Pensioner Concession;
- Desexed & Microchipped;
- Puppies under 6 months of age;
- Working dogs; and
- Accredited dogs (such as guide and assistance dogs).

Officers follow up the non-registration renewal of dogs and dogs found wandering at large or during investigation of compliance matters. Should a dog be identified as unregistered, an expiation notice may be issued. For information purposes, our current dog registration numbers for the 2022-23 financial year are currently 3119, as compared with 3045 in the 2021-22 financial year.

Microchipping dogs

All dogs must be microchipped by 3 months of age, pursuant to Section 42A of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995. A microchip is a small chip which is a permanent method of identification implanted just under the skin, between the shoulder blades at the back of your dog's neck. Each chip has a unique number, detected using a microchip scanner by our Authorised Officers. The number retrieved allows our Officers to access ownership details of the animal on both State and National databases should your dog stray or become lost, therefore it is essential for pet owners to update their details. Should a dog be identified as not microchipped, an expiation notice may be issued.



Desexed dogs

Dogs born after 1 July 2018 must be desexed by 6 months of age pursuant to Section 42E of the dog and Cat Management Act 1995 (some exemptions apply). Desexing is a surgical procedure commonly referred to as neutering or spaying. Aside from preventing accidental litters, there are many health and behavioural benefits to desexing.

- Desexed animals are generally less likely to get diseases and certain illnesses such as mammary cancer and uterine infections in females and prostate problems in males.
- Desexing commonly reduces behaviour problems such as roaming, aggression and urine marking in males.

By Law No. 5 - Dogs

Port Pirie Regional Council's By-Law No. 5 – Dogs. Allows Council to address or limit dog numbers on private premises without specific Council permission following application. And may be further reviewed to address any concerns identified in the future.

Provide Suitable On and Off Leash Activity Areas

Providing suitable on and off leash activity areas is vital to the success of animal management. Dog owners must have suitable areas to exercise their dogs safely and should be able to exercise their dogs without physical restraint, providing the owner exercises effective control.

Council has provided Frank Green Park, Port Pirie and a new dog park adjacent the Crystal Brook tennis courts as designated off leash parks for dogs. These parks have recently been updated to include more sheltered areas, drinking fountains, and a dedicated small dog area. Council aims to develop further off-leash dog parks and potentially a micro dog park within Port Pirie foreshore area.

Other members of the community must have the ability to use the amenities without fear of harassment by uncontrolled dogs. In areas such as CBDs, streets, roads, and places the public congregate, such as shopping areas, dogs must be under effective control at all times. Other parks and reserves are likely to remain suitable for on-leash activities; however, reserves which are heavily utilised for active recreation by large numbers of the public may be identified as dog restricted areas. Pursuant to the Food Act and the Food Safety Standards, animals (other than accredited service animals) are not permitted in food businesses or public areas designed for food consumption.



Frank Green Park, Port Pirie, designated "Off Leash Park"

Barking

Barking is a natural behaviour for dogs and dogs bark for many different reasons; however, where barking continually occurs or continues to such a degree that it allegedly has a negative impact on the amenity of the area, Council's Officers will investigate and assess to determine the level of nuisance. Determining what is unreasonable or excessive can be challenging, significant resources such as diaries and recording devices are used in the investigation of barking dog complaints, and it can be difficult to resolve the matter amicably between both parties; therefore Council staff will continue to work with dog owners, and place greater emphasis on educating owners on options to reduce barking.

Wandering, Harass, Attack

Dogs wandering at large can cause:

- Threat to members of the community;
- Threat to other animals; and/or
- Injury to themselves and others (such as vehicle accidents, etc).

Council Officers spend significant time and Council resources addressing these type of complaints. Council utilises education and enforcement to minimise these risks and prevent wandering. When a dog is found wandering at large the priority is to firstly detain the dog. Secondly, to return the dog to its owner in a timely manner, reducing the burden on holding facilities, and expense to Council. Officers will provide advice to the owner to prevent future incidents. However, in some instances, an expiation notice will be issued to the dog owner or responsible person.

Should officers be unable to return dogs to their owners at the time of collection, they will then be impounded in Council's holding facilities in accordance with the Dog and Cat Management Act requirements.

Irresponsible dog ownership can lead to uncontrolled dogs, impacting on the amenity of the locality. All dog attacks/harassment complaints must be recorded and investigated. In order to reduce the incidence of dog attacks, Council must educate the public to act responsibly. The issue of dog attacks and harassment is of great concern to the general community, particularly in relation to children and the elderly. Also of great concern is the number of unreported attacks and the fact that the majority of attacks occur on private property.

While a minority of dogs are involved in attacks and harassment, all dogs have the potential to bite, regardless of size, age, breed or temperament, particularly in situations where they are frightened, dominant, protective or possessive. How to avoid being bitten or how to read a dog's body language are important issues on which to educate the public.

Once an attack report is received, Council's Authorised Officers will investigate the incident and take appropriate actions based on the severity of the incident with reference to the Dog and Cat Management Board Severity Scale. Such actions may include expiations and other formal proceedings such as control orders of various levels listed below:

- Menacing Dog;
- Dangerous Dog;
- Destruction of Dog; and
- Prohibited Owner.

Rehoming of Unclaimed/Unidentified Dogs

Council is required to follow the process as outlined in the Dog and Cat Management Act regarding the rehoming of unclaimed dogs. Wherever possible, Council will continue to maintain partnerships with existing stakeholders and reputable agencies to facilitate rehoming of unclaimed and unidentified dogs. New and appropriate partnerships will be pursued where possible.

Partnerships with Stakeholders

Council recognises that successful partnerships with stakeholders is essential in achieving the objectives and aims detailed in this plan, and will continue to work closely with existing partnerships and pursue new connections where and when possible within the local and wider community.

Arrangements for the Detention of Seized Dogs

Council's dog holding facilities are maintained to ensure they are fit for purpose. Council will operate its dog holding facilities in accordance with the "Code of Conduct for Pounds and Shelters" as set down by the Dog and Cat Management Board.

Community Education - Dog Ownership Benefits and Responsibilities

Given that Council's core function is regulatory, it is easier to focus on the negative aspects alone; however there are many benefits of owning dogs. There is a link between dog ownership and better mental and physical health, such as:

Loyalty & Companionship

Dogs are social creatures and thrive on companionship. They will be your best friend, constantly providing you with company, enjoyment and a sense of comfort.



Health Benefits

Studies have shown that petting a dog can lower blood pressure and reduce stress levels. Dogs are also proven to have positive effects on mental health, including reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety. A dog can also encourage you to exercise more, which can lead to a more active lifestyle.

Learning Responsibility

Owning a dog can teach people of all ages about responsibility and caring for another living being.

Sense of Community

Owning a dog can bring families and members of the community together through socialising at appropriate locations and events. They have been shown to stimulate conversation between family and members of the public.

Dog Ownership and Behaviour

Successful pet ownership has both financial and time commitments, therefore it is important that people contemplating pet ownership endeavour to match their choice of pet for their particular home and family circumstances.

Prior to getting your dog, consideration should be given to costs associated with:

- Registration, immunisation, microchipping and desexing requirements;
- Ongoing vet care and quality nutrition; and
- Suitable fencing, shelter and environment enrichment.

The breed determines the size, and often the temperament of the dog and its susceptibility to genetic defects. When selecting a pet it is important to seek appropriate advice on the soundness of animals being considered and their suitability to the home, property and wider environment that the dog will be kept and socialised in as well as the family that the dog will be joining, particularly if small children are involved.

Exercise and Enrichment of Dogs

In addition to the off-leash areas, there are several community run events, such as the Million Paws Walk, Park Run, obedience classes and dog shows, which contribute to the exercise and enrichment of dogs. Council will continue to explore opportunities to support these and future events.

Council will continue to provide education material to the wider community through various platforms.

COUNCIL'S MANAGEMENT OF CATS

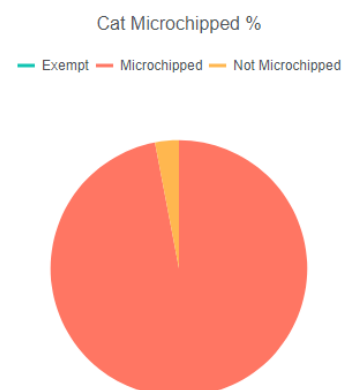
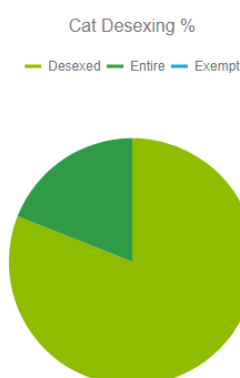
Registration of cats

Unlike dogs, cats are not issued a cat registration number; however, cats are effectively recorded within Dogs and Cats Online (DACO) by microchip number and no registration fee is applicable. Notifications are still issued each financial year to remind you to ensure your contact details are up to date.

When cats are rehomed, you should initiate a transfer of your cat's microchip registration in DACO and then provide the transfer code to the new owner. The new owner will then need to complete the transfer in DACO using the transfer code.

Microchipping cats

All cats must be microchipped by 3 months of age, pursuant to Section 42A of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995. A microchip is a small chip which is a permanent method of identification implanted just under the skin, between the shoulder blades at the back of your cat's neck. Each chip has a unique number, detected using a microchip scanner by our Officers. The number retrieved allows our Officers to access ownership details of the animal on both State and National databases, should your cat stray or become lost, therefore it is essential for pet owners to update their details for Council Officers to be able to reunite you with your cat.



Desexing cats

All cats born after 1 July 2018 must be desexed by 6 months of age pursuant to Section 42E of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 (some exemptions apply). Desexing is a surgical procedure commonly referred to as neutering or spaying. Aside from preventing accidental litters, there are many health and behavioural benefits to desexing.

- Desexed animals are generally less likely to get diseases and certain illnesses such as mammary cancer and uterine infections in females and prostate problems in males.
- Desexing commonly reduces behaviour problems such as roaming, aggression and urine marking in males.

By Law No. 6 - Cats

Port Pirie Regional Council's By-Law No. 6 - Cats and the *Local Nuisance and Litter Control Act 2016* (The Act) allows Council to address any nuisance cat behaviour.

Nuisance cat behaviour may be defined as:

- Activity that unreasonably interferes with the amenity of an area;
- Kills/damages any native fauna or flora;
- Causes damage to property;
- Cats not effectively controlled or wandering at large; and
- Cats not effectively controlled such that the cat (or cats) causes a nuisance.

The By-Law also allows Council to limit the number of cats permitted on private premises to two (2) cats; however specific Council permission can be obtained following application. The Act allows Council Officers to address nuisance complaints as a result of colonies of cats being fed by well-meaning members of the public.

The updated Cat By-Law expected to be adopted by Council in June 2024, will also allow Council Officers to more effectively pursue and expiate owners for allowing cats to wander at large, and or allow cats to create a nuisance.

To assist in managing cat nuisance and at large complaints, Council Officers can provide and service cat traps in an attempt to identify cats causing nuisance.

- Identifiable cats will be returned to the owner, with subsequent compliance actions.
- Unidentifiable cats will be detained by Council and where possible, placed into a rehoming service or otherwise managed in accordance with the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.

Rehoming of Unclaimed/Unidentified Cats

Wherever possible, Council will continue to maintain partnerships with existing stakeholders and reputable agencies to facilitate rehoming of unclaimed and unidentified cats. New partnerships will be pursued where possible.

Partnerships with Stakeholders

Council recognises that successful partnerships with stakeholders is essential in achieving the objectives and aims detailed in this plan, and will continue work closely with existing partnerships and pursue new partnerships where and when possible within the local and wider community.

Community Education about Cat Ownership Benefits and Responsibilities

Given that Council's core function is regulatory, it is easier to focus on the negative aspects alone; however there are many benefits of owning cats. There is a link between cat ownership and better mental and physical health, such as:

Low Maintenance Companionship

Cats can provide affection, family fun and entertainment to people of all ages and lifestyles due to their low maintenance.

Health Benefits

Studies have shown that petting a cat can lower blood pressure and reduce stress levels. Cats are also proven to have positive effects on mental health, including reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Learning Responsibility

Owning a cat can teach people of all ages about responsibility and caring for another living being.

Sense of Community

Owning a cat can bring families and members of the community together through socialising. They have been shown to stimulate conversation between family and members of the public.

Cat Ownership and Behaviour

Successful pet ownership has both financial and time commitments and it is therefore important that people contemplating pet ownership endeavour to match their choice of pet for their particular home and family circumstances.

Prior to getting your cat, consideration should be given to costs associated with:

- Immunisation, microchipping and desexing requirements;
- Ongoing vet care and quality nutrition; and
- Suitable method of containment, shelter and environment enrichment.



There are many options when choosing a cat: kitten or adult, long-haired or short-haired, pure bred or moggie, male or female. Before deciding on your kitten or cat, research your local animal welfare organisations, shelters, rescue groups and breeders.

OBJECTIVES/STRATEGIES/MEASURES

Dog and Cat Management		
Dog Regulation		
Objective	Strategies	Key Performance Indicators
Regulate Legislative Requirements for the Dog and Cat Management Act 2005 & Council's By-Law No. 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual registration reminder notices and text messages issued via DACO. - Authorised Persons to monitor compliance when attending to any dog complaints or investigations (provide advice to owners regarding regulations, issue warnings or expiations to owners). - Officers to patrol areas of known non-compliance. - Inspect the premises of breeding businesses to ensure the number of dogs on the premises matches the number approved by Council. Combine inspections with a representative of the RSPCA, to monitor Animal Welfare Act issues (including breeding standards). - Authorised Persons investigate when attending to any dog complaints (issue advice to owners regarding attack/harrass/chase, issue warnings, expiations and control orders to owners where required). - Inspect the premises where dogs are residing that are subject to control orders, to ensure compliance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual review of compliance statistics and increase in dog registration. - Reduction of expiations issued. - Reduction of animals impounded and euthanized. - Reduction of unplanned litters.
Cat Regulation		
Objective	Strategies	Key Performance Indicators

Regulate Legislative Requirements for the Dog and Cat Management Act 2005 & Council's By-Law No. 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual reminders to update microchip details via notices and text messages issued via DACO. - Authorised Persons to monitor compliance when attending to any cat complaints or investigations (provide advice to owners regarding regulations, issue warnings or expiations to owners). - Inspect the premises of breeding businesses to ensure the number of cats on the premises matches the number approved by Council. Combine inspections with a representative of the RSPCA, to monitor Animal Welfare Act issues (including breeding standards). - Provide cat traps as required or requested by residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual review of compliance statistics. - Reduction of expiations issued. - Reduction of animals impounded and euthanized. - Reduction of unplanned litters.
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OBJECTIVES/STRATEGIES/MEASURES

Dog and Cat Management		
Environment & Enrichment		
Objective	Strategies	Key Performance Indicators
Provide a suitable environment for dogs and cats within the wider community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain existing dog parks (Frank Green and Crystal Brook) and explore options for new dog parks and suitable exercise areas such as Globe Oval and the foreshore area in Port Pirie. - Upgrade equipment and facilities in both off and on-leash areas. - Ensure Visitor Information staff are familiar with on and off-leash areas within the Council area. - Provide cat traps as required or requested by residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in dog park incidents reported. - Reduction in complaints received regarding services provided. - Reduction in complaints received regarding stray cats.
Community Engagement/Education		
Objective	Strategies	Key Performance Indicators
Engage with and Educate the Port Pirie Regional Council Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include in Council's Public Education Program (utilising Council website and social media platforms) to engage with the public via competitions, etc. - Install and maintain education signage at strategic locations. - Provide posters, brochures, and other information to vets, dog training schools, fodder stores and other places where dog and cat owners visit. - Work with local vets to promote the mandatory microchipping & desexing requirements for all dog and cats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual review of compliance statistics. - Reduction of expiations issued. - Reduction of animals impounded and euthanized. - Reduction of surrenders and unplanned litters. - Hold at least 1 community event per year.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Run a desexing promotion, in conjunction with the National Desexing Network and local Vet Clinic. - Provide information to owners of dogs where suitable exercise areas are located and rules in relation to the areas. - Host and/or sponsor Community Events, such as RSPCA Million Paws Walk, Obedience Classes, and Dog & Cat Shows, etc. 	
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LINKS TO RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Community \(Strategic\) Plan | Port Pirie Regional Council](#)
- [Bylaws | Port Pirie Regional Council](#)



APPENDIX 1:

TABLE OF ON & OFF-LEASH PARKS

OFF LEASH	ON LEASH*	NO DOGS**
Frank Green Dog Park, Port Pirie	Solomontown Beach, Port Pirie	Memorial Oval Precinct, Port Pirie
Crystal Brook Dog Park, Crystal Brook	Boat Ramp, Port Pirie	Senate Road Soccer Complex, Port Pirie
	Tennyson, Port Pirie	Flinders View Playground, Port Pirie
	Woodward Park, Port Pirie	Osborne Street Playground, Port Pirie
	Globe Oval, Port Pirie	Adelaide Square Playground, Crystal Brook
	Memorial Park, Port Pirie	Tennyson Playground, Port Pirie
	Princess Park, Port Pirie	Solomontown Beach Playground, Port Pirie
	Peterson Circuit Park, Port Pirie	Woodward Park Playground, Port Pirie
	Higgins Court Park, Port Pirie	Memorial Park Playground, Port Pirie
	Plenty Street Park, Port Pirie	Peterson Circuit Playground, Port Pirie
	Threadgold Street Park, Port Pirie	Higgins Court Playground, Port Pirie
	McBride Court Park, Port Pirie	Plenty Street Playground, Port Pirie
	Moresby Court Park, Port Pirie	Threadgold Street Playground, Port Pirie
	Stanhope Street Park, Port Pirie	Mcbride Court Playground, Port Pirie
	Leonard Park, Port Pirie	Stanhope Street Playground, Port Pirie
	Bauer Street Park, Port Pirie	Acacia Street Playground, Port Pirie
	Sjostrom Drive Park, Port Pirie	Cockburn/Read Street Playground, Port Pirie
	Acacia Street Park, Port Pirie	Bowman Park Playground, Crystal Brook
	Harrison Crescent Park, Port Pirie	Eyre Road Skate Park Crystal Brook
	Cockburn Street Park, Port Pirie	Pump track Solomontown Port Pirie
	Mais Terrace Park, Crystal Brook	Solomontown Skate Park Port Pirie
	Bowman Park, Crystal Brook	Quarry Road Playground, Warnertown
	Flinders St Park, Crystal Brook	Flinders Street Playground, Crystal Brook
	Jubilee Park, Crystal Brook	Bunyip Park Playground, Koolunga
	Adelaide Square, Crystal Brook	Koolunga Bowling/Tennis Club Playground, Koolunga
	Quarry Road, Warnertown	Mortimer Park Playground, Redhill
	Bunyip Park, Koolunga	Second Street Playground, Napperby
	Ellis St RV Park, Redhill	
	Bowman St Park, Redhill	
	Redhill Oval, Redhill	

**Note: for the purpose of the Dog and Cat Management Act, a dog is to be under effective control by means of physical restraint in all other public places other than a park, unless signed otherwise.*

***Note: no dogs allowed within 5m of all designated playgrounds.*

APPENDIX 2: DOG PARK MAPS

FRANK GREEN DOG PARK



CRYSTAL BROOK DOG PARK

