

**ELECTRONIC ATTACHMENTS
FOR
BUSINESS PAPER**

6:30 PM, TUESDAY, 11 MARCH, 2025

REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION

Item 1. Lighting Trial on Sporting Grounds

Attachment 1: Engagement Outcomes Report 2

Item 10. Post Exhibition - Proposal for an off Leash Area for Companion Animals at Steel Park

Attachment 1: Steel Park Off Leash Engagement Report 12



Sports Ground Lighting trial

Engagement Outcomes Report

25 June to 31 August 2024



Contents

Summary3

Project background3

Promotion and engagement methods3

Who did we hear from?4

Summary of feedback5

Next steps10



Summary

From 1 July to 31 August 2024, Council trialled keeping flood lights on at sport grounds from 5pm until 9pm every night. From 25 June and throughout the trial, the community was invited to provide feedback.

A total of 884 people visited the Your Say project page, 99 provided feedback through the online survey and 15 provided feedback via email.

A total of 74% of respondents of the online survey completely agreed with the proposal. The main reason for agreeing was ability to exercise at night, increases safety and being able to walk dogs at night.

Of the 15 email respondents, 60% were against the proposal citing concerns with light and noise pollution for local residents and biodiversity, along with energy consumption and parking issues.

Project background

At its meeting on 4 June 2024, Council resolved to commit to the trial and give the community the opportunity to provide feedback throughout.

Promotion and engagement methods

Promotion method	Stakeholders engaged
Project page on Your Say Inner West	884 people viewed the project page 1,330 times
Emails to key stakeholders	1,059 registered members on the Your Say Inner West platform
Council's social media	2 Instagram and 2 Facebook posts -8,477 people reached - 154 reactions - 15 shares
Local Matters Forum (Ashfield-Djarrawunang ward) presentation	42 attendees
Posters	2 posters in each sporting ground affected by the trial (excluding Henson Park)



Engagement method	Stakeholders engaged
Online survey	99 surveys completed
Direct contact from residents	15 emails from individuals
Young Leaders Working Group	Parks Planning presented to three community members in the Young Leaders Working Group (YLWG) on 5 August 2024 on the lighting trial.

Who did we hear from?

Through the online survey, participants were asked which of the following best describes their connection with this proposal.

Adjacent residents, dog walkers and walkers/runners were the top three types of participants.

Connection	Percentage of participants
Live in a property adjacent to a sports ground	21%
Dog walker	21%
Walker/runner	18%
General park user	15%
Sports player	13%
Visit park with kids	9%
Walk through a park to get somewhere else	2%
Other	1%
Commercial fitness trainer	0%
Cyclist	0%

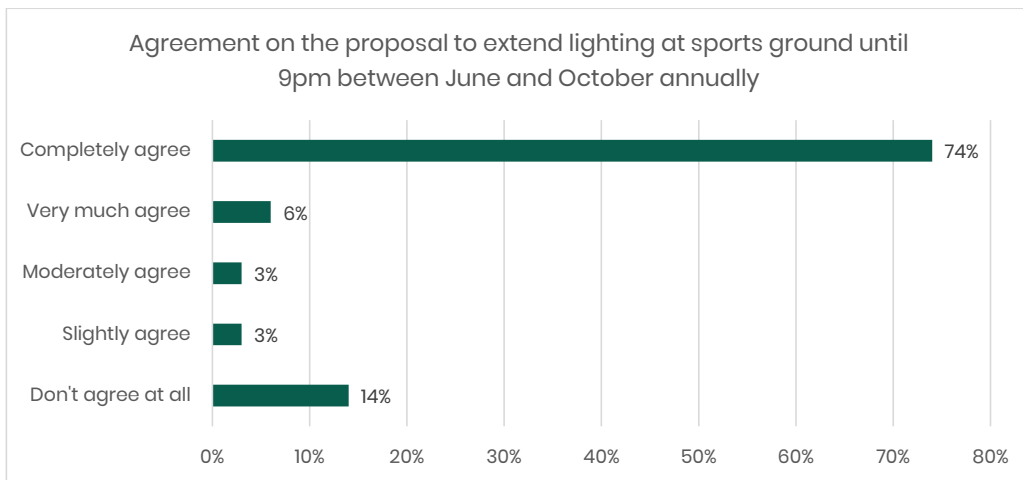


Summary of feedback

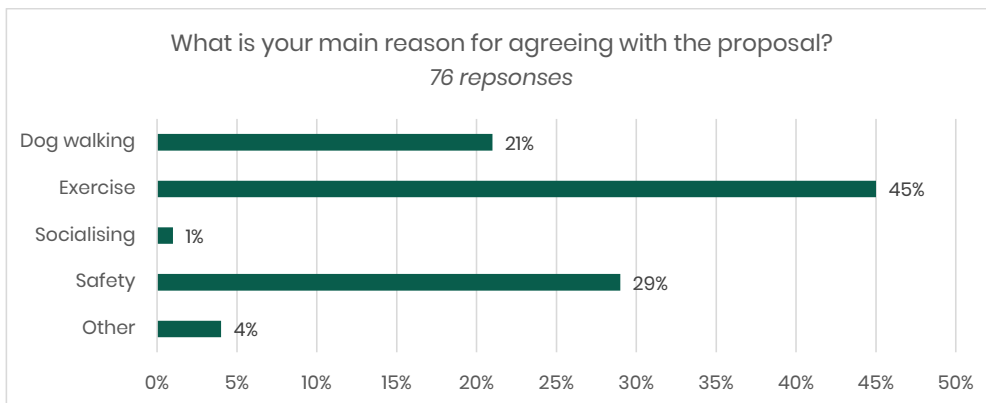
This section provides an overview of the feedback provided through the Your Say online survey and emails.

A total of 99 responses were received through the online survey. Participants were asked if they agree with the proposal and their reason and given the opportunity to provide feedback on specific sport grounds.

A total of 74% participants completely agreed with the proposal.

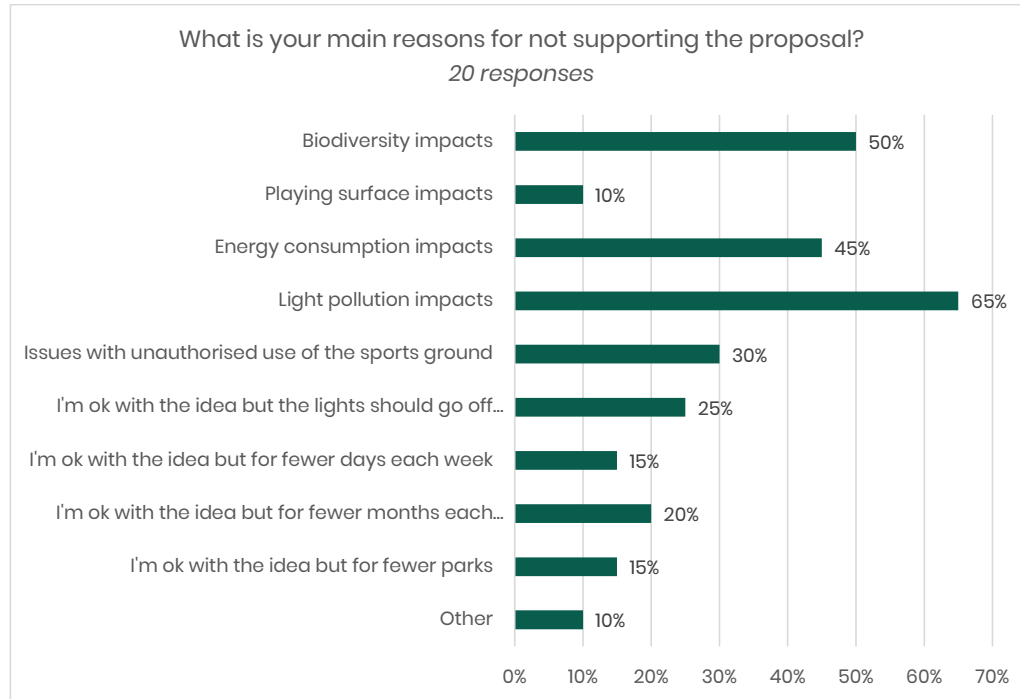


The main reasons for agreeing was ability to exercise at night (45%), increases safety (29%) and being able to walk dogs at night (21%).



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The main reasons for not agreeing were light pollution impacts (65%), biodiversity impacts (50%) and energy consumption impacts (45%).



A total of 15 community members provided responses via email. Nine were against the proposal, five supported it, and one respondent was unclear.

A total of 85 participants (78 from the online survey and 7 email respondents) provided feedback on 21 specific parks. Participants in the online survey were given the option to provide feedback on up to three parks.

Park name	Total comments
Algie Park	2
Arlington Recreational Reserve	2
Ashfield Park	12
Balmain Road (Callan Park)	4
Birchgrove Oval	8
Blackmore Park	1
Camperdown Oval	9



Centenary Park	5
Cohen Park	3
Easton Park	4
Glover Street (Callan Park)	3
Hammond Park	7
HJ Mahoney Reserve	9
King George Park	5
Leichhardt # 2	1
Leichhardt # 3	0
Mackey Park	5
Marrickville Park	11
Petersham Park	21
Pratten Park	8
Steel Park	7
Tempe Reserve	2
Waterfront Drive	4

Staff have reviewed and themed all responses and any themes mentioned more than three times are listed below.

You said	At which grounds and at how many comments	
Increases safety (51 comments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ashfield Park (4) Balmain Road (Callan Park) (2) Birchgrove Oval (1) Camperdown Oval (4) Centenary Park (1) Glover Street (Callan Park) (2) Hammond Park (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HJ Mahoney Reserve (3) Mackey Park (4) Marrickville Park (7) Petersham Park (12) Pratten Park (2) Steel Park (3) Waterfront Drive (1) Not park specific (2) Leichhardt #2 (1)
Allows exercise at night (41 comments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ashfield Park (2) Balmain Road (Callan Park) (1) Camperdown Oval (3) Centenary Park (4) Glover Street (Callan Park) (2) Hammond (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> King George Park (1) Mackey Park (2) Marrickville Park (1) Petersham Park (6) Pratten Park (6) Steel Park (5) Waterfront Drive (2) Not park specific (1)

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<p>Able to walk dogs at night <i>(21 comments)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HJ Mahoney (3) • Algie Park (1) • Ashfield Park (1) • Balmain Road (Callan Park) (1) • Birchgrove Oval (1) • Centenary Park (1) • Leichhardt #2 (1) • Easton Park (1) • Glover Street (Callan Park) (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leichhardt #2 (1) • Hammond (1) • HJ Mahoney (4) • Mackey Park (1) • Marrickville Park (2) • Petersham Park (2) • Steel Park (2)
<p>Increases general use <i>(18 comments)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arlington Recreational Reserve (1) • Algie Park (1) • Balmain Road (Callan Park) (1) • Centenary Park (1) • Cohen Park (3) • Easton Park (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glover Street (Callan Park) (1) • Hammond Park (1) • King George Park (1) • Marrickville Park (2) • Petersham Park (3) • Pratten Park (1) • HJ Mahoney Reserve (1)
<p>Increases activities for children <i>(14 comments)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashfield Park (1) • Birchgrove Oval (2) • Camperdown Oval (3) • HJ Mahoney Reserve (1) • Mackey Park (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marrickville Park (2) • Petersham Park (2) • Pratten Park (1) • Steel Park (1)
<p>Negative impacts on neighbours including shining lights and noise <i>(15 comments)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birchgrove Oval (1) • Camperdown Oval (1) • Easton Park (1) • Hammond (2) • HJ Mahoney Reserve (1) • Hammond Park (1) • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King George Park (1) • Petersham Park (2) • Pratten Park (1) • Steel Park (1) • Non park specific (2) • Ashfield Park (1)
<p>Would support with different conditions around lighting <i>(9 comments)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algie Park (1) • Ashfield Park (2) • Birchgrove Oval (1) • Camperdown Oval (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easton Park (1) • King George Park (1) • Petersham Park (1) • Waterfront Drive (1)
<p>Existing parking issues at sports grounds and parks <i>(5 comments)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arlington Recreational Reserve (1) • Birchgrove Oval (2) • Hammond Park (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohen Park (1) • Glover Street (Callan Park) (1) • Non park specific (1)



Close the sport grounds on Mondays <i>(8 comments)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birchgrove Oval (1) Camperdown Oval (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easton Parl (1) King George Park (1)
Improves general socialisation <i>(6 comments)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camperdown Oval (1) Centenary Park (1) Leichhardt #2 (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Petersham Park (1) Pratten Park (1) Not park specific (1)
Overuse will damage sporting fields <i>(3 comments)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non park specific (3) 	
Negative effect on biodiversity <i>(3 comments)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Petersham Park (1) Non park specific (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hammond Park (1)
High energy consumption and cost <i>(3 comments)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Petersham Park (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non park specific (3)

Seasonal Sporting Group Comments

- Sporting Grounds should be closed during inclement weather for all users
- Unauthorised / unsupervised use of sports grounds in months when growth is at its minimum can impact the status of a sports field.
- Additional traffic on a sports ground when Council has determined a maximum number of hours usage can cause sports field degradation.
- Sports Clubs will see addition park usage and ask why they are unable to have structured use of that same space while lights are on.
- Concerns in relation to disputes between hirers and non-hirers.
- Damage caused by unsupervised and unchecked evening park usage.
- While the extended lighting may seem like a positive step, it has had unintended negative consequences for the condition of the grounds.
- Misuse, by large unauthorised groups often gathering and engaging in activities that cause significant damage to the fields. This has accelerated the wear and tear, making it difficult for the grounds to recover and maintain their quality, which ultimately affects all users.
- The increased deterioration of the fields puts pressure on already limited resources and prevents sports grounds from being used to their full potential when they are open.



- Policy undermines efforts to preserve the quality of the fields for everyone who enjoys them.
- Permanent extension of the lighting trial will increase foot traffic to unsustainable levels and create challenges for local sporting participants and Council’s maintenance teams.

Young Leaders Working Group

A Council representative attended the Young Leaders Working Group meeting on 5 August 2024 to discuss the lighting trial and seek feedback. The following recommendations were provided:

- Consider turning off the lights on the weekend evenings as people have the whole day to utilise the parks (vs during the week when at school/work)
- Lock the public toilets in the evenings, for safety of the community as instances where dangerous materials found on bathroom floor
- Skate parks having lights on is a good thing

Next steps

A formal report on the engagement outcomes of the lighting trail, combined with financial implications on making such a trail permanent and any other emerging issues will be considered by Council at its next available Ordinary Council meeting.

All community members who provided feedback will be advised when the reporting process is completed and the date when the Council officer report will be considered by Council. A final Policy will be considered by Council.

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Steel Park – Dog off-leash Proposal

Engagement Outcomes Report

09 September – 27 October 2024



Contents

Summary3

Project background4

Promotion and engagement methods5

Who did we hear from?5

Summary of feedback7

Next steps9



Summary

From 9 September to 27 October, the community was invited to provide feedback on a proposal for the creation of a dog off-leash area at Steel Park in Marrickville.

During the engagement period, 1,048 people visited the Your Say project page.

A total of 142 individuals and 2 organisations provided feedback, including 129 responses to the online survey, 10 email responses, 3 In-person responses, 1 Letter, and 1 phone call response.

A total of 12 people attended the drop-in engagement session held at Steel Park on 26 October.

The majority of respondents (62%), supported the proposal, 34% did not and 4% were unsure.

For those in support, key themes include that the proposal would improve community cohesion, provide essential space for dogs to exercise, and would formalise an already existing activity in the park.

For those not in support, key themes include safety concerns, particularly around children, and the impact to the parks condition for community sport.

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Project background

In November 2023, residents submitted a petition with 108 signatures to Council, requesting the formal establishment of a dog off-leash area in Steel Park, Marrickville. The petition identified a proposed area, known as Field 2, located at the southern end of the park adjacent to the PCYC and Thornley Street.

Following this submission, Council passed a notice of motion at its June 25 meeting to engage the community on the introduction of a dog off-leash area at the park.

On 10 July 2024, Council staff conducted a site visit to assess a suitable location for the off-leash area, concluding that Field 2 was the most appropriate choice.



Note: Red rectangle marks Field 2



Promotion and engagement methods

Promotion method	Stakeholders engaged
Project page on Your Say Inner West	1,048 visitors to the project page
Posters	6 at Steel Park
Letters	Letters were sent to residents within a 400m radius of Steel Park.

The community was invited to provide feedback through an online survey, on-site face to face engagement session, phone, letter, and emails. Below is a summary of the engagement methods and the stakeholders engaged.

Engagement method	Stakeholders engaged
Online survey	129 surveys completed
Direct contact from residents	9 emails from individuals 3 In-person engagement 1 phone call 1 email from child care centre 1 Letter from sporting club
On-site engagement session	12 attendees

Who did we hear from?

Council gathers basic demographic information as part of the participant registration process online at Your Say Inner West. We use this information to understand who has responded and whether we need to engage further on the proposal.

Demographics	Percentage of respondents
Gender	59% Women or Female 34% Man or Male

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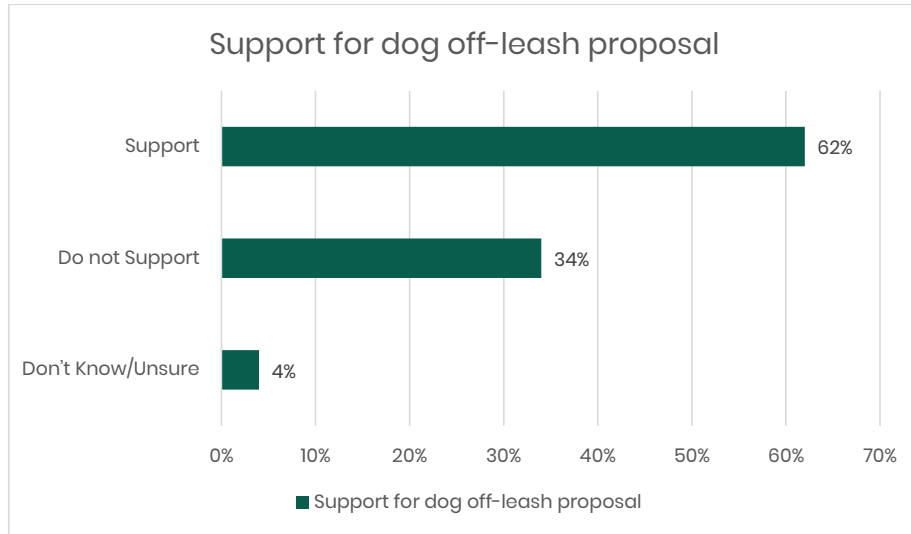
	<p>5% Prefer not to say 2% Use a different term</p>
Age	<p>22% of respondents were aged 35-39 16% of respondents were aged 40-44 13% of respondents were aged 50-54 12% of respondents were aged 45-49 Other age groups were less than 10% of responses each.</p>
Location	<p>55% of respondents lived in Marrickville South (2204) 10% of respondents lived in St Peters</p>



Summary of feedback

Feedback from residents

A total of 142 individuals provided feedback through the online survey, email, phone and on-site engagement session.



Support

A total of 62% of people supported the proposal. Comments included:

- **Creates a positive community impact** and benefits of a designated area for off-leash dogs with increased community connections
- Improvement in overall health and wellbeing of residents
- **The area is currently used in this manner.** The proposal would formalise this already existing use of the park
- **Increased socialisation** and exercise for dogs
- Noted that the **field is underutilised when sports are not on** and that it is a great space for dogs during those times
- **Request for additional boundary fencing** to enhance safety and prevent dogs from entering other areas of the park
- **HJ Mahoney Memorial Park should remain as an off-leash dog park.**



Do not support

A total of 34% of people did not support the proposal. Comments included:

- **Safety Concerns for children and families.** Residents noted that an off-leash area would be close to the children’s playground and the Yirran Gumal Early Learning Centre. Concern for potential dog aggression and incidents towards children and families.
- **Existing dog off-leash area at HJ Mahoney Memorial Park.** Residents noted there is an existing off-leash area in close proximity to Steel Park and that there is no additional need to another dog off-leash area.
- **Negative Impact on sports fields.** Concerns that dog activity will damage the sport field turf for community sport.
- **Concerns about irresponsible dog owners.** Respondents noted that several dog owners are irresponsible and leave waste and sticks on the field and allow their dogs to roam past designated areas off-leash.

Unsure/do not know

A total of 4% of people were not sure about the proposal. Comments included:

- Support for off-leash areas at both HJ Mahoney and Steel Park, ensuring HJ Mahoney access is not removed to meet the growing demand for dog spaces.
- Concerns about Steel Park’s suitability, citing poor parking, safety risks, proximity to busy areas, and potential turf damage if it overlaps with sporting fields.
- Request for proper fencing, policing, and management of off-leash areas to ensure safety, especially for reactive dogs, and to prevent overcrowding or conflicts.

Several residents asked for additional amenities, including waste bins and bags and a multipurpose water bubbler. Council staff note that these have since been installed.



Feedback from organisations

Marrickville Football Club and Yirran Gumal Early Learning Centre sent correspondence advising they do not support the proposal.

Concerns noted include:

- Sport field deterioration leading to an increased risk to injury and areas that will become unplayable as has happened at other parks.
- Exacerbate incidents involving off-leash dogs attacking other dogs and people at the park.
- Accessing the grounds with children when dog owners refuse to put their dogs on leash
- Concerns around child safety

Next steps

At its meeting in February 2025, Council will decide whether to formalise the proposal. All community members who provided feedback will be advised on the outcome.