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## AGENDA ITEM C1

### POTENTIAL OFF-LEASH DOG EXERCISE AREA IN GREYTOWN

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#### **Purpose of Report**

To obtain Council approval to develop an area of Council-owned land at the southern end of Cotter Street (previously part of old Stella Bull Park) in Greytown as an off-leash dog exercise area.

#### **Recommendations**

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Approve Council-owned land at the end of Cotter Street, Greytown, as an off-leash dog exercise area.*

## **1. Executive Summary**

Council is in the process of publicly notifying an amended Control of Dogs Policy and Control of Dogs Bylaw. Schedule B of the bylaw identifies Council-owned off-leash dog exercise areas in the South Wairarapa. To date both Featherston and Martinborough have off-leash dog exercise areas that have been well received and used by the public.

Greytown does not have an area set aside for this purpose despite calls from the community. While there is an existing joint Council/Lions walkway off Udy-Kuratawhiti Street that is used by dog owners, dogs are still required to be on a leash. Officers consider that a parcel of land at the southern end of Cotter Street (which previously formed part of old Stella Bull Park) should be considered as a potential off-leash area for Greytown residents.

## **2. Background**

Officers in 2011 provided a report to the Greytown Community Board seeking feedback on preferred options for off-leash dog exercise areas in Greytown. The sites identified included:

- Old Railway Shed land
- Westhaven flats (open space area); and
- Collier Reserve

At the time old Stella Bull Park was being leased for a two-year term, but it was noted by Officers that the site was worth considering for an off-leash exercise area once the lease finished.

Since 2011 there has been significant development at the southern end of Greytown. The roading for the Governors Green development has separated around 1 hectare of the old Stella Bull Park from the remainder of the land. The licensee no longer requires this land, and Council has removed it from the grazing licence and is treating it as reserve. This land was identified and flagged to Council and Community Boards in the December IS Group report as a potential dog exercise area.

### **3. Discussion**

To help determine whether an area would be appropriate for use as an off-leash dog exercise area we can consider the existing legislation, policy and bylaw and also the current practices of other local authorities.

#### **3.1 Legal implications**

The Dog Control Act 1996 governs off-leash areas by requiring all local authorities to develop policy classifying public places where dogs shall be given access. Council's existing policy gives Council the ability to designate dog exercise areas by resolution and this has been carried over into the draft policy currently out for public consultation. While the decision to create a dog exercise area can be made by resolution, Officers consider it prudent to consult with the general public and the site was therefore identified as a *proposed* area in Schedule B of the notified draft bylaw.

##### **3.1.1. Continuous control**

Council's policy recognises the need to provide for the exercise and recreational needs of dogs and their owners. This is balanced with the need to prevent any potential harm to the public. Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times in public places unless:

- a) They are under continuous surveillance and effective control; and
- b) The place is designated a dog exercise area.

##### **3.1.2. Site assessment**

South Wairarapa District Council's Policy does not specify criteria for determining the suitability of a site for an off-leash area. Wellington City Council's Dog Control Policy lists the following criteria which it uses to determine whether or not to set aside exercise areas for dogs.

- The area is not used extensively for sporting or other purposes
- The area is of significant size and has appropriate access
- There are sufficient sight lines
- The area is well bounded from adjacent areas
- No potential risk to other groups.

#### **3.2 South end of Cotter Street, Greytown**

Old Stella Bull Park is located at the southern end of Cotter Street, Greytown. The site, while zoned residential, is rural in nature and isolated from the township with a large open space area of 7.5 hectares. The area

on the north side of Pierce Street (1 hectare in total land area) is unusable due to road extensions to Cotter and West Streets for the Governors Green development. This area is marked green on Appendix 1 and both sections are available and could be fenced to accommodate an off-leash exercise area.

### **3.3 Financial Considerations**

The off-leash dog exercise area at Roberts Street in Martinborough cost \$10,000 to develop and it is anticipated that a similar amount will need to be invested for this proposed Greytown site to address fencing, troughs, seating and signage.

## **4. Conclusion**

Council, when deciding whether to designate an off-leash exercise area, should consider whether there is potential for people, stock or property to be placed at risk by errant dogs or dog soiling.

Officers consider that the land available at the southern end of Cotter Street would be the most appropriate in the Greytown Township. This parcel is on the urban fringe, is ideal in terms of size, accessibility and location and would meet the site assessment criteria. In addition its proximity to the Greytown-Woodside Trail ties in with community projects in the immediate vicinity. The proposal would add value to the Greytown community and meets the long term plan community outcomes for a vibrant, strong and sustainable South Wairarapa.

## **5. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Available Land (formerly part of old Stella Bull Park)

Contact Officer: Vanessa Tipoki, Group Manager Planning and Environment (Acting)

**Appendix 1 – Available Land  
(formerly part of old Stella  
Bull Park)**

