

Proposed Changes to Pet Access Information

Sharing special places with our pets

Pets in our community

Pets are valued members of our families. There are many areas of the Sunshine Coast where they are welcome, including on-leash and off-leash areas. You can view these locations on [Council's website](#).

A few locations have designated areas where pets are not allowed due to the sensitivity of the area. This is made possible through local laws and Council regulations. This is because our parks provide a refuge for native plants and animals.

Limiting access to some areas can also keep your pet safe. When threatened, some local fauna species may defend themselves, potentially injuring your pet.

Pets can present threats to fauna and flora, cultural heritage sites, and members of our community due to:

- their presence, sound or scent
- chasing or scaring wildlife including causing wildlife to leave their habitat or their young unprotected
- impacting on other users of the area
- their waste (faeces, droppings, urine)
- potentially introducing disease and/or the spread of weeds.

Therefore dogs, cats, and all other domestic pets—including caged birds—aren't generally allowed in areas of environmental or cultural significance. Certified guide, hearing and assistance dogs are exceptions. Certified support dogs must wear an identifying coat or harness and the approved badge or tag.

Changes to pet access in Point Cartwright Reserve and La Balsa Park

Community engagement for the draft Point Cartwright Reserve and La Balsa Park Master Plan identified significant and opposing feedback about pet access (mainly dogs) in these areas. Some people wanted dog access retained, while others wanted it minimised or stopped completely. People shared how much they enjoyed visiting the reserve and park with their pets, whilst others had concerns about safety and the environmental impacts of pets.

Independent cultural, environmental and recreational studies identified other key areas including environmental protection with special consideration to:

- **Littoral Rainforest and other vegetation** – areas of natural closed forest in close proximity to the ocean and high value fauna and flora.
- **Migratory Shorebirds** – the world's most threatened group of birds. They travel 20,000-30,000 km each year to spend the summer on the Sunshine Coast before returning to their breeding grounds in the northern hemisphere. Ensuring they have a safe place to rest is crucial to their survival.



- **Nudibranch** (new-dih-bronk) – a type of sea slug with many sporting brilliant colours and eye-catching patterns on their skin that live in the La Balsa river rock wall.
- **Turtles** – all turtles, particularly Australia's eastern population of nesting loggerheads (around 500 nesting females, one of the most significant nesting areas on the Sunshine Coast).
- **The beach** – protecting the beach and dunal areas.
- **Fauna** – the reserve and surrounding area is home to native fauna that is under threat by human impacts.
- **Recreational activities** – the reserve and park area are used for a diverse range of activities by a diverse range of user groups due. Finding a 'middle ground' to maintain these recreational activities and reduce conflict between users.
- **Cultural heritage** – the parkland holds profound cultural heritage importance including culturally significant sites and flora and fauna. Although the area has experienced substantial alterations dating from the 1960's, much of the cultural and ecological value is intact.

Proposed changes

Community feedback, along with Council's civic responsibility to provide a safe public place and protect and preserve the values of environmental and cultural significance for the benefit of generations to come, means that some changes to pet access are proposed in the area. See the map on page 3 for more information.

- New areas of environmental and cultural protection will be in place. These areas include the rocky foreshore, north facing beach, and vegetated areas and will be prohibited to pets.
- Pet access will remain available elsewhere in the reserve and park, with pets permitted on-leash only, at all times.
- To offset this change, Council will be increasing off-leash areas nearby (refer map).

Extended off-leash pet access areas

- An extension to the dog off-leash area at Buddina, between Beach Access 201 - 205.
- Council will also continue to investigate other dog on-leash and off-leash areas for the convenience of our community.

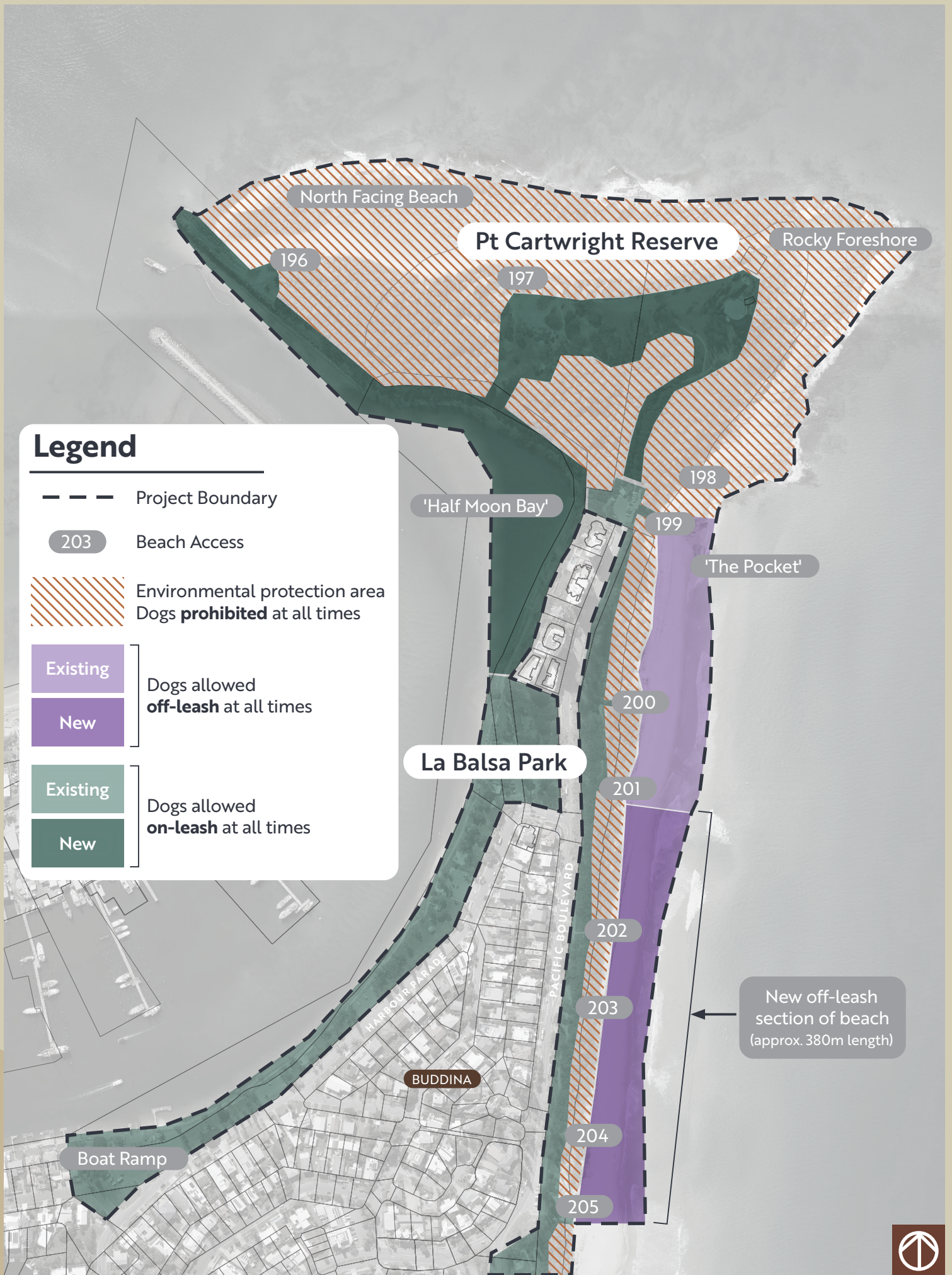
Next steps

These changes are subject to the local law amendment process and will be subject to a separate community engagement process later this year.

Be a responsible pet owner

To ensure that pet access remains available at Point Cartwright Reserve and La Balsa Park please check and follow the signs carefully. The simple rules below will help ensure your visit is enjoyable – for you, your pet, other visitors and local wildlife.

- Keep pets on-leash and under control at all times.
- Always clean up after your pets. Bring your own bags, collect your pet's waste and dispose of it responsibly when you leave.



Proposed Changes to Pet Access - Map