

Public Exhibition Consultation Findings

Draft Biodiversity Strategy 2025 – 2035

1. Executive Summary

In line with the engagement objectives, Council publicly exhibited the Draft Biodiversity Strategy from April 1 to May 19 to gather community feedback on its vision, goals objectives and proposed actions (Objective 1). The exhibition period also provided opportunities for direct engagement between community members and project managers, fostering open dialogue and enabling in-person feedback (Objective 2). Overall, the response was positive, with 76% of participants supporting the Strategy's overall direction and 76% endorsing the draft vision. These insights have informed refinements to the final Strategy (Objective 3).

Council offered a number of engagement options for the community to provide feedback, including a Shaping Banyule survey, focus group session with our Environmental Friends Groups, in-person workshop with the Community Biodiversity Working Group and invitation for written and in person submissions to the project lead.

Overall feedback provided recommendations to strengthen key sections to the Strategy while Council Officers further improved the Strategies recognition of self determination for Wurundjeri involvement.

Key updates include.

- Inclusion of an acknowledgement for Wurundjeri to add actions as they form a path of self-determination.
- Strengthened alignment with the Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.
- Improved language in the Vision to commit to seeing no loss of local species.
- Separated pest plant and animal objectives with targeted measurements, recognising this was a key improvement to the original draft.
- Added the name of the revegetation target (Biodiverse Banyule) after community endorsed this as the name and included messaging and an action around maintenance of this.
- Committed to see no loss of local fauna over the life of the strategy and improved messaging around the Flagship species.
- Improved 5 objectives to convert them to SMART objectives from feedback this needed improvement.
- Inclusion of an Action Snapshot on Part two, providing the reader with a 'readers digest' version of the actions under each strategic direction.
- Changed language around significant species to commit to all species improvements based on multiple submissions.
- Removed several sections that contained 'jargon' to improve language and strengthen intent in Parts 1 and 2.
- Included Action number, allowing for direct reference in a concise format.

These improvements have led to a bold, community-driven strategy shaped by all who have contributed.

Overview

In 2023, Council initiated a comprehensive review and update of its Biodiversity Plan (2019 – 2022). This process included extensive community consultation, with valuable input from the Community Biodiversity Working Group. Feedback from the community, as well as internal and external stakeholders informed the development of the Draft Biodiversity Strategy 2025-2035.

The Draft Strategy was placed on Public Exhibition from April 1 to May 19, providing the community with an opportunity to comment on its overall direction, draft vision, goals, objectives and proposed actions. This report outlines engagement statistics, consultation methods, detailed community feedback and officer response to Strategy changes.

2. Engagement Objectives

Objective 1

Gather community feedback on the Draft Biodiversity Strategy, including its vision, goals objectives and proposed actions.

Objective 2

Facilitate direct engagement between community members and project managers to encourage dialogue and collect in-person feedback.

Objective 3

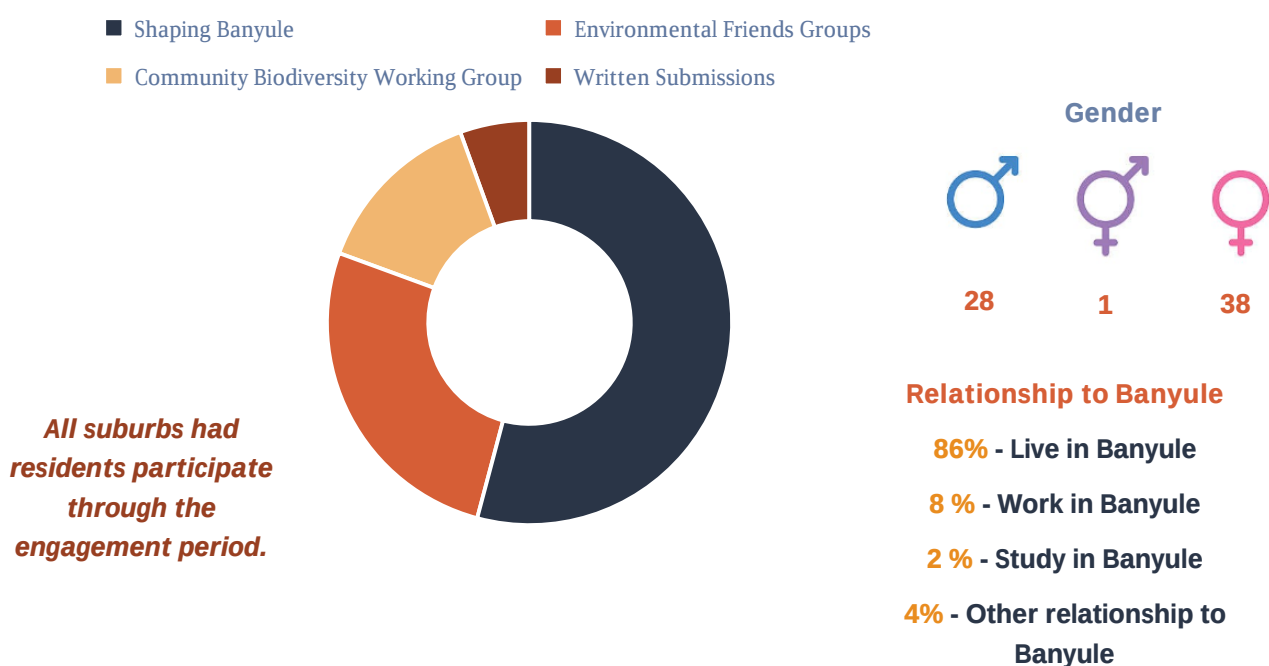
Enhance the Draft Strategy by incorporating insights and suggestions from community engagement into the final version.

3. Participation and Engagement Methods

Participation Overview

Over the official Public Exhibition Period, Council received an enthusiastic and generous response from the community. The below results are a combination of demographics collected over this period. A total of 72 community members contributed to our Shaping Banyule survey, attended a focus session, contributed to the Biodiversity Working Group workshop and provided written submissions on the Strategy. The below is an overview of the demographics that were captured through the survey and our engagement methods.

Figure 1 outlines the demographic statistics captured from the Public Exhibition period.



Shaping Banyule

A homepage was created on Shaping Banyule with the Draft Biodiversity Strategy, Biodiversity Benchmarking Report and first Consultation Findings paper to provide the community with transparent information, allowing for informed input into the survey.

This survey asked the community:

- Do you agree with overall direction of the Strategy,
- Does the Vision resonate with you, and
- Do you agree with each of the Themes, Goals, Objectives and Actions within the Strategy

The survey further provided the ability for respondents to comment on each section to provide more detail into why they chose their response.

Social Media Campaign

Participation in the Biodiversity Strategy survey through Shaping Banyule was promoted through a paid social media campaign and site signage with a QR code link to the survey. Hard copies were left at Council's customer service centres and community was invited to engage with the Project Lead.

The social media campaign also had a promotional video, featured on Council's social media channels directing people to the Shaping Banyule site, featuring the project leads.

Environmental Friends Group Focus Group

An in person focus group was established with our Environmental Friends of Groups to provide in person feedback on the Strategy. The Session was held at the Old Shire offices where the Project Leads guided the volunteers through each of the Themes and invited in person feedback from participants.

Community Biodiversity Working Group

The Community Biodiversity Working Group, which has been instrumental in supporting the development and support of the Biodiversity Strategy was invited back to provide comment through a guided workshop. Like the session with the Environmental Friends of Groups, the community members present were asked to comment on each of the Themes and asked what was missing and what needed to be strengthened.

Written Submissions

The campaign actively invited the community to provide feedback through any medium. One of these ways was through written submission where people could leave comments on a physical copy of the Draft Strategy or provide a separate document with their comments.

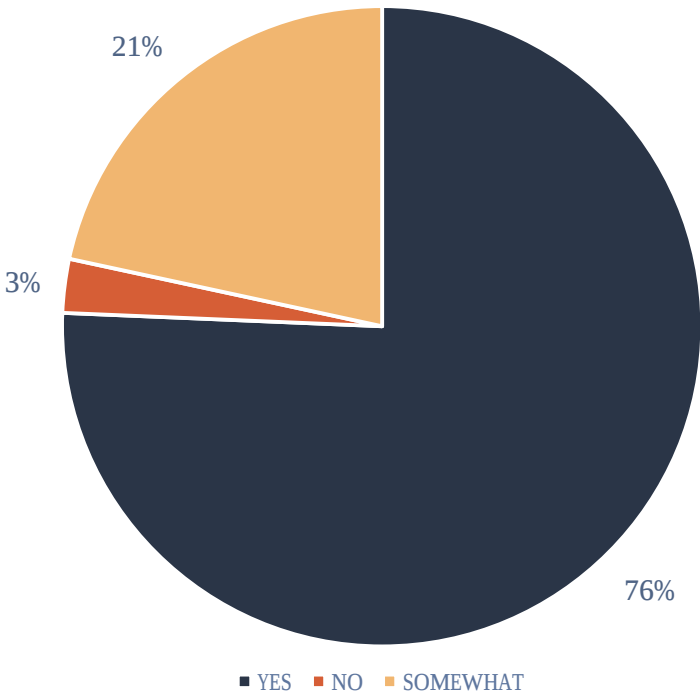
4. Consultation Findings

4.1 Shaping Banyule

The Public Exhibition period from April 1st to May 19th included a Shaping Banyule survey which asked people to respond questions about the direction of the Draft Strategy, its Vision, the Goals, Objectives and Actions under each of the priority Themes. The following data represents community feedback officer comments and adjustments to the Draft Strategy where appropriate.

4.1.1 Do you agree with the direction of the Strategy?

Feedback for the question, *do you agree with the direction of the Strategy* provided an overwhelming positive support with 76% of responses indicating yes. 21% of indicated they somewhat, and 2 % indicated no they did not agree. Figure 2 provides a visual breakdown of this feedback. Table 1 details the comments from the optional question *why did you choose this response* with Officer response and adjustments made in the Strategy where appropriate. *Note: as an optional question, not all respondents chose to leave a comment.*



Yes	No	Somewhat	Comment	Officer Response and Strategy Adjustment.
			Lots of general words no specifics can't endorse	The Strategy deliberately uses specific language to be clear of intent has been deliberately inclusive to inform a broad sector of the community.
			I think more plants need to be planted especially natives and small fruit trees	Theme 2 Enhancing our Biodiversity and the 250,000 indigenous vegetation target relates to this comment specifically. No further change to the Strategy
			I believe that biodiversity is hugely important to creating sustainable and resilient suburbs, and anything we can do to improve biodiversity in Banyule is a positive move. The Draft Strategy appears reasonably comprehensive, reasonably ambitious and well balanced.	No further change to the Strategy.
			I support the strategy as it will increase indigenous vegetation in the municipality. This kind of vegetation supports native wildlife. Banyule, like other Councils, need to consult with their Conservation Team to determine what resources they need to effectively manage their natural ecosystems. Bushland restoration is a specific area of expertise and should be treated as such. I also support the environmental engagement aspects and adoption of the gardens for wildlife program as custodianship is paramount to protecting our natural areas.	The Strategy outlines an overview of the resource increases required to deliver the Strategy in full on Page 64 and detailed resources for each Action in Part 3 – Action Plan. No further change to the Strategy
			Because it seems a lot of time and effort, including energy has gone into this project so far.	No change to the Strategy.
			Generally, the strategy maintains status, however, we are entering an era where we need to counteract the growing extreme negative forces against biodiversity in our care. We must quickly restore and BUILD resilient biodiversity. The Strategy needs to be more aggressive around 'net positive' biodiversity strategy.	Introduction of a restoration target is a key part of the Strategy. Updated information around ensuring maintenance of indigenous plants supporting this target and ensuring we retain our enhancements has been added on page 27 and Action 3.5 wording has changed to include advice around maintenance of indigenous species.

		Because I think it's really important that Council creates this document and embeds caring and enhancing biodiversity into all facets of Council operations. The principles of Water Sensitive Urban Design, canopy planting, indigenous plants, protecting and restoring our public reserves is vital for Banyule to maintain liveability and address the costs of environmental impact and climate crisis.	No further change to the Strategy
		Vital that Banyule and all other municipalities in Vicotria develop clear guidelines and increased fines for removal of native vegetation to support the work in Banyule of the Darebin Park Rangers verge planting - removal of all agapanthus and other introduced species in all Council and resident verges. Imperative to have protected 'homes' for all native plants, vertebrate and invertebrates, birds and animals. Council could advertise the 'free plant' program more widely in the Banyule Banner etc to encourage more indigenous planting. It's almost too late for many plants and animals so Council must act before any more is lost.	Recognising the need to elevate the importance of Pest Plant and Animal actions, the Strategy has separated these into two new Objectives. Objective 14: Understand, plan, and manage the threats of pest animals (foreign and domestic) on our local biodiversity Including two new actions on Page 71 AND Objective 15: Actively manage pest plants on public land and promote the importance of controlling pest plants on private land. Including four new actions on Page 71
		I understand it is a "Strategy" but I think there should be a much more 'Action' oriented plan for the First 5 years. It feels like it's a study in 'Bureaucratic Blurb', which unfortunately is likely to result in no action	The Strategy outlines a detailed Action Plan in Part 3 – Action Plan (page 63) and further identifies the need to have this set as a 5-year Action Plan on Page 25 where Figure 6 highlights “A monitoring and reporting framework for the Biodiversity Strategy”.
		I applaud the focus on protecting threatening species. There is a clear direction for working with partners including indigenous community and environmental groups.	No further change to the Strategy.
		I want to see us doing everything we can to protect the beautiful environment we have	No further change to the Strategy.

		I think the Strategy is appropriately comprehensive and the actions will provide real long-term value to Council's ability to protect biodiversity.	No further change to the Strategy.
		OMG. This is incredible. I love this has been written by Council Officers as you can really feel the local knowledge coming off the page and feels so familiar. Consultants are great, but they tend to make cookie cutter strategies, and you can tell. This feels so local. I love the amount of consultation that has clearly been done, both internally and externally to ensure this plan is ambitious and clever, but achievable with the ability to see real results. I love the structure, with clear scene setting, justification and actions, it flows really well and builds the story beautifully. I love the images, the really sell the importance of biodiversity as you are looking through the pages. Most of all - I LOVE how this is going to affect Banyule in the next 10 years, so many REAL tangible outcomes that seem so achievable because you've done the work to lay them out in a logical and realistic way. This is brilliant and Banyule are lucky to have such dedicated Officers leading this work. Thanks so much for all the work with this and can't wait to see these things start to roll out.	No further change to the Strategy.
		Banyule Council doesn't have a history of looking after our open spaces outside of the Ivanhoe and Heidelberg areas. In Watsonia they tend to sell off land for development rather than protect the environment.	The Strategy includes a specific theme around the protection of our natural environment. Action 5.1 on page 70 has been created to ensure Council are being proactive in the protection of vegetation in the private realm. No further change to the Strategy
		We need to support nature-positive actions for biodiversity protection and enhancement across Banyule, to arrest the decline.	No further change to the Strategy
		Most of the Plan is great! 1. It should also address pruning of tree canopy. Over-pruning of street tree canopy in the last few years by Council Contractors has seen the beautiful	Pruning of canopy trees is addressed in the Urban Forest Strategy which outlines an action to develop a Tree Management Framework.

		street canopies reduced by about a third, resulting in dramatically less habitat for native birds and insects the live on. There is noticeably less morning birdsong and bird activity due to this removal and disruption of their roosting spots. 2. More emphasis should be placed on the joint land management with neighbouring Councils. The recently threatened removal of shared funding for the Darebin Parklands Management Committee's Ranger and attempted removal of Rockbeare Grove section from their management was a step in the wrong direction towards managing biodiversity across borders.	Theme 5 Partnerships for Biodiversity talks of partnerships with multiple agencies surrounding Banyule. No further change to the Strategy.
		I feel very strongly that we need to protect Banyule's Biodiversity. I would like to see some Community Education session, to learn about all of the 6 Flagship species, specifically how and where we can observe these species and what we can do to help protect their local habitats. I really enjoyed the recent Darebin Creek Spotlight Walk.	Objective 15 has an updated action (6.2) on Page 71 to undertake community engagement centred around the Flagship species.
		The Strategy is a fair attempt to try and get the foundations going (e.g., understanding and monitoring). It's unclear to me however how the 250,000 target impacts on what is already underway noting no additional resourcing required and to what extent it is being meant by the Urban Forest Strategy. It also seems to be short sighted. It's one thing to get things planted it is another to make sure the follow up investment in required maintenance is undertaken to support survival and quality habitat development. The Strategy and implementation plan also fails to call out key risks. There is a high reliance in this strategy on volunteers be it planting and maintenance of the 250,000 or G4W. You only need to contact G4W now to understand that there are long wait times to access consults and there are struggling to get sufficient volunteers (not just in Banyule).	The Strategy outlines key areas where resourcing is required (Volunteer support, program delivery and planning referral advice) these are intended to alleviate existing work on operational and strategic teams to dedicate more time on maintenance and support for community to realise the revegetation target. Updated information around ensuring maintenance of indigenous plants supporting this target and ensuring we retain our enhancements has been added on page 27 and Action 3.5 wording has changed to include advice around maintenance of indigenous species.
		I believe that this Strategic document provides a valuable pathway towards achieving important environmental goals, both in the shorter and longer terms.	No further change to the Strategy.

		Lots of talk about interpretive signage and pamphlets, no mention of the uncontrolled use of herbicide by various bodies responsible for managing public lands and the effect that this has on biodiversity as well as human health.	Banyule's Weed Management Strategy (a technical document to the Biodiversity Strategy) addresses the plan for public land managers to undertake integrated weed management with the recognition herbicides play a role but need to be strictly controlled and other techniques utilised. No further change to the Strategy.
		There is a heavy focus on the impacts of cats on biodiversity and in the Strategy is mentioned nearly 100 instances. In my own experience Dogs are also very destructive in the ground nesting and fledgling birds, vulnerable marsupials and key nature corridors around Heidelberg and Rosanna are considered off-lead areas, and dogs are allowed to roam into bushland with limited owner control for hunting, foraging and digging and attacking wildlife in broad daylight and with the owner consent. Public space continually becomes overly urbanised and industrialised, key trees in local parks are frequently removed for the sake of structural progress. Retention of biodiversity like trees and canopy on private land carries no financial incentive and its removal is generally encouraged to increase housing stock, The strategy doesn't do anything to address this.	Improved action under objective 14 has been added on page 48 (Part 2) and Page 71 – Action 5.6 (Part 3).
		Land management stakeholder in Banyule LGA	No further change to the Strategy
		Because any action is better than nothing.	No further change to the Strategy
		There is a lot of great focus areas involved.	No further change to the Strategy
		I would like to understand how the Strategy will be implemented across Council departments. It's a fine statement but unlikely to be implemented	The Strategy outlines key areas where resourcing is required (Volunteer support, program delivery and planning referral advice) which are intended to alleviate existing work on lead officer to be the driver of the Strategy implementation.
		I agree totally but unfortunately many people care more about building the largest house on the street and cut down native trees without permits. Take 64 Carlsberg Road	Action 5.1 on page 70 refers to embedding expert knowledge into development processes. This intent is to create better outcomes for vegetation retention on the private realm.

		Eaglemont. More than a quarter of an acre of gum trees illegally removed, but their view is great.	No further change to the Strategy
		I feel very strongly that we need to elevate protection of nature as a community and as a wider society. We should not accept that grief and despair after the loss of biodiversity is inevitable. We need to shift our focus as a community to restoring the balance between human life and natural systems and it is wonderful to see the Banyule Council focus on this. We are very lucky in Banyule to be part of the 'green wedge'. We should go hard on this.	The Strategy draws strong links to the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan on page 9 and Theme 4 dedicates actions to building value of biodiversity into the community.
		Gathering knowledge about biodiversity in Banyule and making evidence-based decisions is a sensible approach.	No further change to the Strategy
		In this day and age, it is NEEDED at local, State, Federal and world levels.	No further change to the Strategy
		If followed it outlines, clear pathways moving forward to protect diversity and increasing diversity.	No further change to the Strategy
		Banyule is in an ecological emergency. Our local biodiversity is declining at an alarming rate, and without urgent and sustained intervention, we risk losing species and ecosystems that are vital to the identity and health of our community. I commend Council and the team for preparing a well-researched and thoughtful Biodiversity Strategy. It provides a strong and much needed foundation for addressing these challenges. I agree with the overall direction of the Strategy, but believe it requires stronger commitments - particularly in resourcing - to realise its full potential. I have witnessed this decline firsthand at Yandell Reserve, my local bushland. Over the years, species that once thrived have diminished or disappeared. The Eltham Copper Butterfly, a nationally endangered species that depends on highly specific habitat conditions, continues to decline. Threats such as climate change, increased weed cover (often from surrounding gardens), and fragmented	The Strategy outlines key areas where resourcing is required (Volunteer support, program delivery and planning referral advice) these are intended to alleviate existing work on operational and strategic teams to dedicate more time on maintenance and support for community to realise the revegetation target. Action 4.1 on page 69 addresses the need to develop a Wildlife Corridor Plan that will guide future works around connected habitats, strategic revegetation locations and reducing fragmentation. Action 2.7 and 2.8 on page 67 refer to embedding biodiversity considerations into Council processes and elevating community value. Recognising the need to elevate the importance of Pest Plant and Animal actions, the Strategy has separated these into two new Objectives.

from infrastructure like new paths have significantly reduced habitat quality. These local changes reflect broader, systemic issues, and they demand a strategic and adequately funded response. However, for the Strategy to deliver real, lasting outcomes, Council must commit to adequately funding and resourcing its implementation. This includes:

Increasing staffing and capacity across relevant departments to strengthen the protection of biodiversity through planning, enforcement and land management.

Boosting investment in the care of our bushland, waterways, and biodiversity corridors, which are home to locally significant and threatened species.

Expanding support for environmental volunteers, who play a critical role in the stewardship of our natural spaces.

Embedding biodiversity more deeply in Council's operations, and recognising its value to our community's identity, wellbeing and local economy.

In addition, Council should increase its efforts to treat pest plants and animals, implement intensive management actions for threatened species, develop stronger indicators and long-term monitoring methods to track ecological change, and build local awareness - particularly among neighbours of bushland reserves - about their role as custodians. Stronger planning controls area also needed to protect remnant habitat on adjacent private land and reduce further encroachment.

With a few key improvements and a serious commitment to resourcing, this Strategy has the potential to not only halt the decline of biodiversity in Banyule, but to begin reversing it. I strongly encourage Council to match its strategic ambition with the investment and leadership required to turn this vision into action.

Objective 14: Understand, plan, and manage the threats of pest animals (foreign and domestic) on our local biodiversity

Including two new actions on Page 71

AND

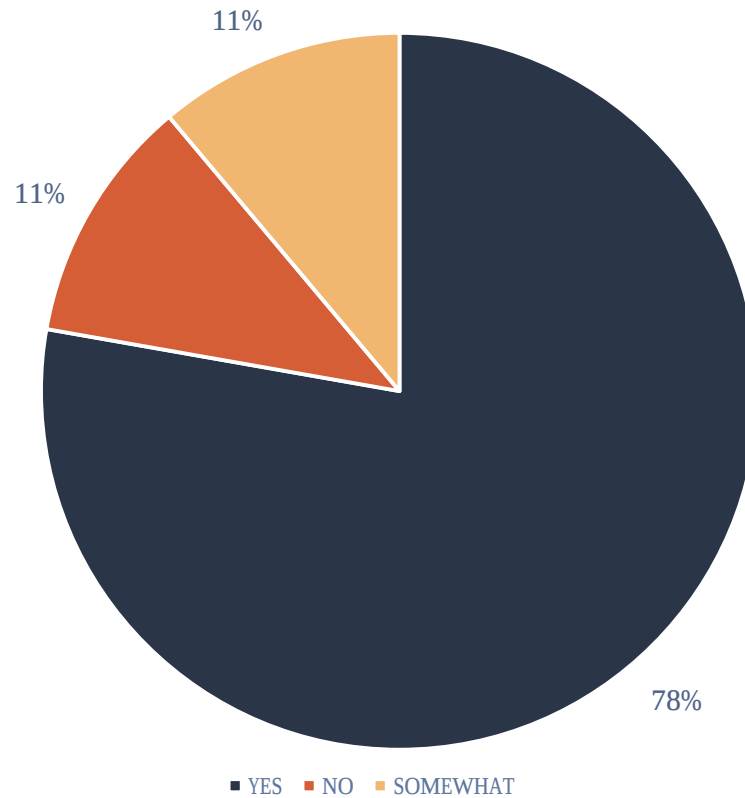
Objective 15: Actively manage pest plants on public land and promote the importance of controlling pest plants on private land.

Including four new actions on Page 71

Action 5.1 on page 70 refers to embedding expert knowledge into development processes. This intent is to create better outcomes for vegetation retention on the private realm.

4.1.2 Does the draft vision for biodiversity resonate with you?

Feedback for the question, *does the draft vision for biodiversity resonate with you* provided positive support with 78% of responses indicating yes. 11% of indicated they somewhat, and 11 % indicated no they did not agree. Figure 3 provides a visual breakdown of this feedback. Table 2 details the comments from the optional *why did you choose this response* with Officer response and adjustments made in the Strategy where appropriate. *Note: as an optional question, not all respondents chose to leave a comment.*



Yes	No	Somewhat	Comment	Officer Response and Strategy Adjustment.
			Lots of general words no specifics can't endorse, please outline specific actions.	Part 3 outlines the strategies specific actions to be implemented over the next 5 years. No further changes to the Strategy.
			I don't like London plain trees, and I think they should be removed as they cause problems with drainage and uplift footpaths. Native small plants and small fruit trees should be planted in naturestrips.	Banyule's Urban Forest Strategy refers to the strategic direction of tree and canopy provisions for the municipality. The Urban Food Strategy further refers to Council intent to increase food sources in spaces that don't impact on conservation and wildlife corridor areas. No further change to the Strategy
			Absolutely. Indigenous flora and fauna and healthy functioning ecosystems deliver our vital ecosystem services such as fresh water, clean air and food. We need to protect, enhance and build stewardship for these areas for their betterment, and for ours. Banyule should adopt a strictly indigenous planting clause, in which only indigenous plants are used in revegetation, but also landscaping practices and open space areas.	No further change to the Strategy
			Because everything I could think of has been taken into account.	No further change to the Strategy
			Generally, the strategy maintains status, however, we are entering an era where we need to counteract the growing extreme negative forces against biodiversity in our care. We must quickly restore and BUILD resilient biodiversity. The Strategy needs to be more aggressive around 'net positive' biodiversity strategy	Updated information around ensuring maintenance of indigenous plants supporting this target and ensuring we retain our enhancements has been added on page 27 and Action 3.5 wording has changed to include advice around maintenance of indigenous species.
			Some of our reserves are severely degraded and impacted by pest animal/plants or just allowed to become drains for the urban development. Enhancing and increasing these	Recognising the need to elevate the importance of Pest Plant and Animal actions, the Strategy has separated these into two new Objectives.

	spaces will require a huge investment from Council in partnership with community, but I think the benefits of seeing wildlife in our backyards, cooling our streets, cleaning our air and water is worth every investment.	Objective 14: Understand, plan, and manage the threats of pest animals (foreign and domestic) on our local biodiversity Including two new actions on Page 71 AND Objective 15: Actively manage pest plants on public land and promote the importance of controlling pest plants on private land.
	Living amongst the most beautiful gum trees and listening to birds have a great feed all along my street brings home to me how important it is for all streets to have indigenous plants and trees for our native animals to feed on, take cover, provide homes for all types of animals. I love to hear the trees 'hum' with bees and birds chatter away as they feed. Such a difference walking along a street with indigenous trees, there's an immediate reduction in temperature on hot days. I'm saddened to walk around new developments with introduced plants which give no food to the animal population. I feel Council should enforce clear vegetation guidelines on all new developments. Very large fines should be imposed on developers who remove native vegetation in breach of Council regulations.	Action 5.1 on page 70 refers to embedding expert knowledge into development processes. This intent is to create better outcomes for vegetation retention on the private realm.
	But whilst we are gathering all this wonderful data, which dare I say, aint gonna happen (refer to data capture for Weed Plan. I suspect nothing happened as most field staff are "weed blind" and too busy getting on with the job, like mowing (grinding) the grass.	The Banyule Weed Management Strategy sets clear actionable targets. Recognising the need to elevate the importance of Pest Plant and Animal actions, the Strategy has separated these into two new Objectives. Objective 14: Understand, plan, and manage the threats of pest animals (foreign and domestic) on our local biodiversity Including two new actions on Page 71 AND

		Objective 15: Actively manage pest plants on public land and promote the importance of controlling pest plants on private land.
		The approach not only covers preservation of fauna and flora, it strengthens community connection to support the vision and improve individual human wellbeing.
		No further change to the Strategy
		I wish it were more ambitious. We have already lost so much, we need to look to reclaim more space and support our environment to recover.
		Vision on page 23 has been updated to see no loss of local fauna and enhance our conservation areas and wildlife corridors.
		The phrasing 'preserved all locally significant fauna makes it sound as though it's something to be ticked off and forgotten about. Perhaps it would be better to say 'retained' all locally significant fauna.
		Vision on page 23 has been updated to see no loss of local fauna and enhance our conservation areas and wildlife corridors.
		It's incredible to get a Biodiversity Vision included in this document, a vision ensures that everyone is clear on what Banyule is expecting and working towards. This is beautiful, clear and simple vision which is easy to sign up to.
		No further change to the Strategy
		I think it is important to work towards improving the well-being of our flora and fauna especially in the areas damaged by construction of the North Eastlink.
		No further change to the Strategy
		As a guide for Gardens for Wildlife every opportunity to engage with the public regarding biodiversity is vital.
		No further change to the Strategy
		I feel the collaborative approach that is suggested will be very successful.
		No further change to the Strategy
		I agree with it.
		No further change to the Strategy
		Plantings may have positive impacts where they are targeted with the correct choice of plants, most likely many will be too thin and unfocused. No one reads interpretive signs, pamphlets and are a waste of paper, both are a waste
		Action 4.1 on page 69 addresses the need to develop a Wildlife Corridor Plan that will guide future works around connected habitats, strategic revegetation locations and reducing fragmentation.

		of tax/ratepayers' monies. Do your website and online data collection for those interested, leave it at that. Stop spraying herbicides.	Interpretive signage action was removed as a double up and a more targeted action 2.4 on page 67 adjusted to focus on high value biodiversity sites in the private realm under key environmental overlays.
		Biodiversity is beyond important to the fauna and flora of Australia. I support this vision as I believe it can profoundly help our threatened species in the Banyule region	No further change to the Strategy
		It is a vision but continues to be in direct conflict with commercial incentives to remove canopy at all opportunities on private land. The market and legislations are various levels of government will continue to pull this vision in the opposite direction. The Vision scope should be limited to what is public land and conditional on only what Banyule considers to be significant.	The Vision is a call to action for all, and Council has a role to play in leading in the biodiversity enhancement space. The Strategy talks clearly of the complexity of biodiversity management across multiple land management spaces and has Them 5 – Partnerships for Biodiversity as a priority for this reason.
		Yes the draft vision is good but where are the practicalities - where will you plant some of the 250,000 plants and more importantly how will they be looked after and maintained. Maintenance is very important after planting.	Action 4.1 on page 69 addresses the need to develop a Wildlife Corridor Plan that will guide future works around connected habitats, strategic revegetation locations and reducing fragmentation.
		I think this is an extremely important area for the Council to manage appropriately.	No further change to the Strategy
		Could you clarify why you state you will only preserve locally significant fauna, but you will enhance wildlife corridors, and only maintained diverse and healthy indigenous flora, increase canopy cover and fostered. The attributes of the vision are contradictory.	Strategy has been changed in the Vision on page 23 and for our Flagship species on page 18 to strengthen a commitment to preserve all indigenous species.
		It could be more ambitious in scope and more resources should be allocated to properly empower the stewards of the Strategy. For example, I don't see anything in the draft strategy about increasing the number of Rangers the Council employs. There also needs to be stronger disincentives for overdeveloping private land and more	Vision on page 23 has been updated to see no loss of local fauna and enhance our conservation areas and wildlife corridors. The Strategy outlines key areas where resourcing is required (Volunteer support, program delivery and planning referral

		powerful policing/punishment for the removal of native habitat from private land. I would like to see stronger laws against building multiple dwellings in single blocks, as this nearly always leads to reduction of green spaces. I would also like to see a discussion about the Council purchasing private land to create more coherent wildlife corridors.	advice) these are intended to alleviate existing work on operational and strategic teams to dedicate more time on maintenance and support for community to realise the revegetation target.
		All worthy goals to include in a vision. Protecting new areas to make up for losses from the North East Link would be worthy of inclusion.	No further change to the Strategy
		It speaks to improving habitat and diversity from current status and protecting significant species.	No further change to the Strategy
		Yes, the draft vision resonates with me and outlines important goals for Banyule's ecological future—enhancing wildlife corridors, increasing canopy cover, and fostering a strong community connection to nature. It's a positive and forward-looking statement. However, I believe the vision could be strengthened by: Emphasising the urgency of the biodiversity crisis; Reflecting the need for collaborative action between Council and the community; and Expanding the focus beyond just locally significant species to include all native species, particularly those that are threatened, declining, or ecologically important. We must recognise that many species and ecosystems are already degraded and will require active restoration—not just protection—to recover. The vision should also speak to maintaining the ecological function of landscapes, not just individual species or sites. A more inclusive and action-oriented version of the vision	Vision on page 23 has been updated to see no loss of local fauna and enhance our conservation areas and wildlife corridors.

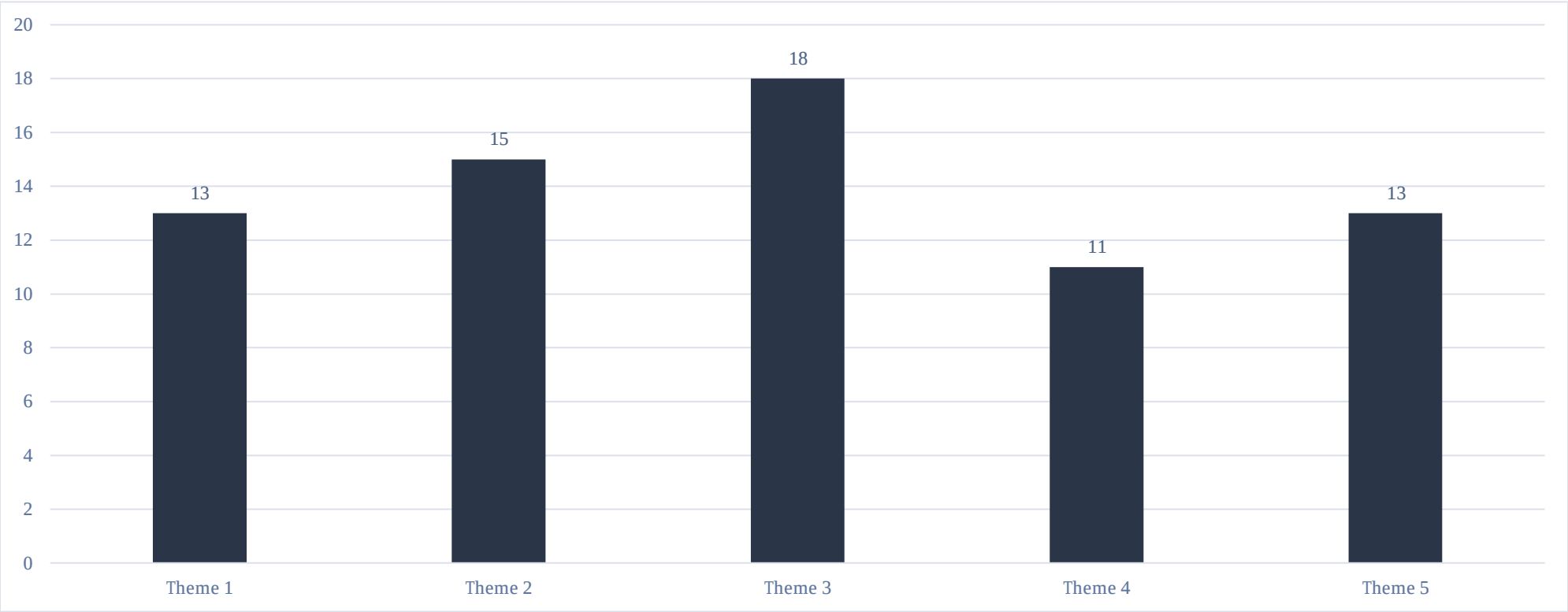
might be:

“By 2035, Banyule and its community have halted the decline of biodiversity, supported the recovery of native species, restored degraded habitats, enhanced wildlife corridors and canopy cover, and fostered a community that is deeply connected to and actively caring for nature.”

This version underscores the urgency, the shared responsibility, and the need to restore ecological health for the benefit of all species—not just those already recognised as significant.

4.1.3 Themes

People were asked to comment on themes, goals objectives and actions of the Strategy. The survey allowed people to chose what Themes they wanted to provide comment on with Theme 3, Protecting our Biodiversity being the most commented on (18). Them 4, Our Wellbeing and Biodiversity was the least commented on but still elicited 11 responses. Figure 4 provides a visual breakdown of this feedback overall while Figure 5 provides a further breakdown into each Theme and if people responded yes, no or somewhat to the question *Do you agree with the Objectives, Goals and Actions in this theme?* Table 3 details the comments from the optional question *why did you choose this response* with Officer response and adjustments made in the Strategy where appropriate. *Note: as an optional question, not all respondents chose to leave a comment.*



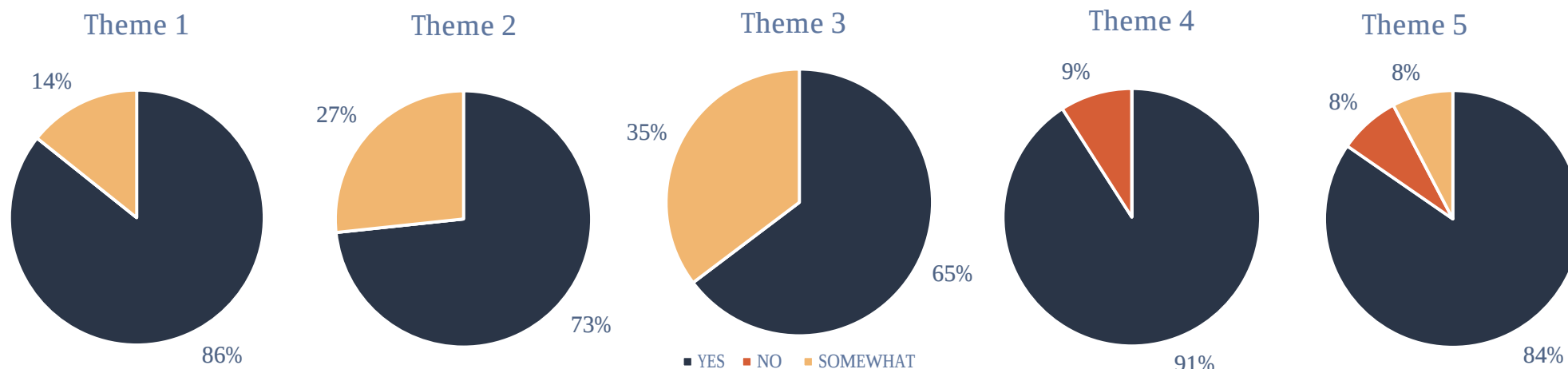


Figure 5 above, outlining the responses provided to each of the Themes in the Strategy and if people agreed with the Goals, Objectives and Actions under each of these.

THEME 1 – KNOWLEDGE AND OUR BIODIVERSITY

Yes	No	Somewhat	Comment	Officer Response and Strategy Adjustment.
			Because we need to be educated, remember knowledge is power	No further change to the Strategy
			Engage technical knowledge to identify and plan where we need to BUILD net positive biodiversity (not just restore it)	Action 4.1 on page 69 addresses the need to develop a Wildlife Corridor Plan that will guide future works around connected habitats, strategic revegetation locations and reducing fragmentation.
			This is super important, especially within Council. If officers don't understand the value of biodiversity, or the Council goals they can't work towards biodiversity goals.	No further change to the Strategy
			We already have a lot of knowledge and yes always good to capture more information but looks like an excuse to do	Consultation was clear Council need to invest in building their knowledge of Biodiversity. Action 1.1 on page 65 identifies

		nothing (or worse stop activity) pending hoped on new knowledge.	the critical need to develop a Biodiversity Monitoring Program. Further Themes talk of the importance of proactive biodiversity response, so Council doesn't stop activity. Theme 2 – Enhance our Biodiversity is based around a biodiversity build concept.
		Absolutely integral to ensure we know what we're dealing with, amazing to see this as a standalone goal.	No further change to the Strategy
		It is difficult to engage with the public in a positive way without becoming a 'preacher'. Engaging with the young people is vital in as many ways as possible	Theme 4 – Wellbeing and our Biodiversity refers to the importance of positive biodiversity interactions.
		I mostly do agree with these goals. Subsection goals for Council in particular could be more robust; the general wording is somewhat non-committal but well intended. I'd like to see commitment to environmental awareness training for ALL Council staff.	Review of goals, objectives and actions have seen strengthened target metrics in 14 areas.
		Whilst the Themes are good, there needs to be more knowledge in the community for managing the negative impacts on biodiversity, e.g., managing their pets (e.g., cats) and also planting invasive species which then spread outside of their homes.	Recognising the need to elevate the importance of Pest Plant and Animal actions, the Strategy has separated these into two new Objectives. Objective 14: Understand, plan, and manage the threats of pest animals (foreign and domestic) on our local biodiversity Including two new actions on Page 71 AND Objective 15: Actively manage pest plants on public land and promote the importance of controlling pest plants on private land.
		A good series of objectives is proposed. It would also be wise to aim to publish findings in per-reviewed journals where possible so that important attributes of Banyule's biodiversity are on the scientific record.	Valued suggestion. Yearly reporting through the State of the Environment Report is an existing commitment outlined on page 25. Further discussion to have findings publishes in scientific journals is needed and falls outside of the scope of the Strategy.

			I believe the foundation for this theme is right, however there could be some minor improvements or considerations.	The goals, objectives and actions have been reviewed and no further change to the Strategy is needed.
THEME 2 – ENHANCING OUR BIODIVERSITY				
			I strongly support planting of indigenous species across Banyule and the creation of wildlife corridors. In particular I would love to see significant planting of native species in the wake of NELP.	No further change to the Strategy
			We should be able to achieve ambitious goal than 250k plants within 10 years. Double it using the current and new community, school and business participation.	Updated information around ensuring maintenance of indigenous plants supporting this target and ensuring we retain our enhancements has been added on page 27 and Action 3.5 wording has changed to include advice around maintenance of indigenous species. This target was realised through extensive consultation and research to allow for the maintenance element of revegetation projects.
			I especially liked the identified goal to strategic revegetation for wildlife corridor linkage. This is a great way to build a case for community to get involved in a specific action.	No further change to the Strategy
			250,000 may seem like a large number, would personally prefer 300,000 or more. At any rate, anything that increases biodiversity in Banyule is to be lauded	Updated information around ensuring maintenance of indigenous plants supporting this target and ensuring we retain our enhancements has been added on page 27 and Action 3.5 wording has changed to include advice around maintenance of indigenous species. This target was realised through extensive consultation and research to allow for the maintenance element of revegetation projects.
			I think there should be more explicit measure of plant establishment success beyond the planting stage - dead plants are enhancing biodiversity. Connectivity objectives should also include investigating and implementing wildlife safe road crossings.	Updated information around ensuring maintenance of indigenous plants supporting this target and ensuring we retain our enhancements has been added on page 27 and Action 3.5 wording has changed to include advice around maintenance of indigenous species. This target was realised

			through extensive consultation and research to allow for the maintenance element of revegetation projects.
		Love a stretch goal, and love that this creates shared purpose for the whole community, teaming up Council with households, friends' groups and anyone else. Really nice community project.	No further change to the Strategy
		It's important to have wildlife corridors	No further change to the Strategy
		Fails to address the ongoing maintenance required and appears to be highly reliant on volunteers and yet won't require more resourcing? Also ignores the opportunity to invest in better maintenance and care of what exists already. Measures the input not the outcome.	Updated information around ensuring maintenance of indigenous plants supporting this target and ensuring we retain our enhancements has been added on page 27 and Action 3.5 wording has changed to include advice around maintenance of indigenous species. This target was realised through extensive consultation and research to allow for the maintenance element of revegetation projects.
		I fully agree with all of these	No further change to the Strategy
		This is good; however, this could be improved to add planting of aquatic species that improve water quality e.g., remove sediment from rain events and high nutrients within the water.	Action 3.3 on page 68 refers to this need for aquatic revegetation. Further to this, Banyule is developing an Integrated Water Management Plan that will have strong biodiversity considerations.
		All worthy objectives. The role as a driver of biodiversity should be considered.	No further change to the Strategy
		Yes it's important to improve ecological connectivity, but protecting and enhancing the nature we have across public and private land should be the primary principle	No further change to the Strategy

THEME 3 – PROTECTING OUR BIODIVERSITY

		Although I understand the reason, I've been disappointed by the level of tree clearance for projects like NELP and strongly support any measures to protect existing vegetation.	Action 5.1 on page 70 refers to embedding expert knowledge into development processes. This intent is to create better outcomes for vegetation retention on the private realm.
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		Would like to see a resource in addition to cat traps - also fox traps, these pests are a scourge to local wildlife. Also addressing the existing weed load in private gardens, assisting in removing privet/cotoneaster/sweet pittosporum/desert ash etc.	Objective 14: Understand, plan, and manage the threats of pest animals (foreign and domestic) on our local biodiversity Including two new actions on Page 71
		We can't rest at seeing no extinction, we need to measure if species are rebounding and growing.	Objective 14: Understand, plan, and manage the threats of pest animals (foreign and domestic) on our local biodiversity Including two new actions on Page 71 on page 65 outlines the importance of this through the Biodiversity Monitoring Program.
		Love the concept of Flagship Species, understanding humans can connect to cute animals a bit easier than the whole world of biodiversity. Very clever framing which also acts as a simple goal to achieve, rather than being overwhelmed.	No further change to the Strategy
		Goal 5 could be further modified to suggest that Council Planning staff receive appropriate training in key environmental aspects of Banyule	Considered this and Action 2.7 and 2.8 on page 67 have been updated to refer to embedding biodiversity considerations into Council processes and elevating community value.
		strategy doesn't offer any path of change that would impair the persistent infestations and demand to 1) improve tress on private land 2) retention of large trees on Council land, including nature strips 3) prevention of dogs accessing sensitive areas.	Banyule's Urban Forest Strategy refers to the strategic direction of tree and canopy provisions for the municipality. Objective 14: Understand, plan, and manage the threats of pest animals (foreign and domestic) on our local biodiversity Including two new actions on Page 71
		Goal 6 - are you saying 'significant' because these are ones you have a little more data on? Who defines which are significant?	Goal six has been updated to refer to include all fauna and flora.
		This is good, however water quality and understanding pollution levels, e.g., high nutrients, chemical levels and oxygen demands otherwise no species will live within the	Banyule is developing an Integrated Water Management Plan that will have strong biodiversity considerations including water quality in our local waterways, rivers and creeks.

		waterbodies. All water be within appropriate health indicator limits.	
		Cat curfew enforcement relies on existing resources. The curfew will not be effective without more resources for enforcement and education.	Objective 14: Understand, plan, and manage the threats of pest animals (foreign and domestic) on our local biodiversity Including two new actions on Page 71
		Goal 5 is paramount to the whole Strategy especially where private land is concerned.	No further change to the Strategy
		I think the objectives of goal 5 need some work, in particular elevating planning controls and invasive species management into separate goals, also goal 6 should be no extinctions of any species	Goal 5 has been updated on page 46 to elevate the importance of planning protection. Goal 6 has also been updated on Page 50 to commit to no extinctions of local species
THEME 4 – WELLBEING AND OUR BIODIVERSITY			
		This is a phenomenal area that Council can really harness community energy, funding the Bushcrew with the manpower and planting resources for more local planting days. Love the vouchers and the Gardens for Wildlife programs	No further change to the Strategy
		Banyule's biodiversity and my opportunities to connect with nature are a very important reason for me to live in Banyule	No further change to the Strategy
		So important to build that intrinsic value and make sure people can benefit from our beautiful spaces.	Considered this and Action 2.7 and 2.8 on page 67 have been updated to refer to embedding biodiversity considerations into Council processes and elevating community value.
		We need the green open spaces to reset the stresses of modern life.	The Strategy draws strong links to the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan on page 9 and Theme 4 dedicates actions to building value of biodiversity into the community.
		It is important to give the community a sense of agency and ownership around local environmental matters - from enjoying nature to helping restore and enhance it.	No further change to the Strategy

	Important, however stress the importance of undergrowth species as this is where greater food sources and people can plant in the property easily. Virtual signage through hashtags or QR codes could be a good idea.	Revegetation target outlines the importance of all strata vegetation contributing to the revegetation target.
	Community engagement is essential.	No further change to the Strategy

THEME 5 – PARTNERSHIPS FOR OUR BIODIVERSITY

	Should be able to double the 250 ambitions via these partnerships - we have escalating crises within the decade.	Updated information around ensuring maintenance of indigenous plants supporting this target and ensuring we retain our enhancements has been added on page 27 and Action 3.5 wording has changed to include advice around maintenance of indigenous species. This target was realised through extensive consultation and research to allow for the maintenance element of revegetation projects.
	Shared public asset the Darebin Creek needs the partnerships between the different re-sponsible entities to work on the restoration of re-planting, removing weeds/foxes, re-moving rubbish, slowing and filtering drain water, and could bring back the platypus.	Theme 5 – Partnerships for Biodiversity refers to the importance of joint projects for biodiversity improvements.
	Lovely to expand this to the whole community as well as other land holders and other levels of government.	No further change to the Strategy
	I fully agree.	No further change to the Strategy
	MTM has a strong biodiversity program and is excited to collaborate with land management stakeholders.	No further change to the Strategy
	Important to have stakeholder participation.	No further change to the Strategy
	Engagement with environmental groups, schools and Melbourne Water taps into local knowledge and fosters community.	No further change to the Strategy

5.1.4 Further Comments

Respondents were asked to provide general comments on the Strategy or further thoughts for Council to consider. Table 4 details the comments from the optional question *do you have any further comments of the Draft Strategy* with Officer response and adjustments made in the Strategy where appropriate. *Note: as an optional question, not all respondents chose to leave a comment.*

Comment	Officer Response and Strategy Adjustment.
Your strategy has no specifics just a lot of repeating words and catch phrases that can be interpreted in many ways. How can you vote or have an opinion about something like this?	The Strategy uses specific language to be clear of intent and has been deliberately inclusive to inform a broad sector of the community.
+ they cause asthma, and ruin drains and uplift footpaths.	Comment refers to request to remove Plane Trees and is part of comment on page 12 of this report. Banyule's Urban Forest Strategy refers to the strategic direction of tree and canopy provisions for the municipality.
Great job Banyule. Leading the way by protecting and enhancing biodiversity in the municipality.	No further change to the Strategy
I think Council has so far committed a lot of resources and funding into this project and from what I have read has covered every aspect I can think of including acknowledgement of our First Nations people's, respecting their land rights and building a better environment for generations to come	Acknowledgement to First Nations people is on page 2 of the Strategy. The Strategy further acknowledges our commitment to work with Wurundjeri through invitation to have actions added, supporting self determination around land management practices on page 11, <i>Our Partnerships with Traditional Owners</i> .
Be more ambitious - harness the community's enormous engagement and commitment to biodiversity to BUILD net positive biodiversity (measure natural capital that currently exists, value it in dollar terms, BUILD for multiple return benefits).	Updated information around ensuring maintenance of indigenous plants supporting this target and ensuring we retain our enhancements has been added on page 27 and Action 3.5 wording has changed to include advice around maintenance of indigenous species. This target was realised through extensive consultation and research to allow for the maintenance element of revegetation projects.
I think if this Strategy is embedded into each area of Council, we could be creating something truly special. I hope that it is a requirement - not just lip service - to	No further change to the Strategy

embed the principles into every project and interaction that Council works on. If we can restore wildlife habitat, and the health of our waterways, it's going to look after us for many years to come	
It's imperative that the Darebin Park Rangers continue to do their fabulous work in the parklands/ Without their knowledge, commitment and dedication the parklands could become just another overgrown patch of bush with non-indigenous plants taking over and leaving no food for native fauna and flora.	No further change to the Strategy
Whilst plan makes a brief reference to the Weed Plan, a major task in enhancing Biodiversity is the control/removal of pest species. Planting more indigenous species is good control of pests, in first instance weeds is critical to creating a receptive environment for indigenous plants. My observation is Council is not actively managing weeds.	Recognising the need to elevate the importance of Pest Plant and Animal actions, the Strategy has separated these into two new Objectives. Objective 14: Understand, plan, and manage the threats of pest animals (foreign and domestic) on our local biodiversity Including two new actions on Page 71 AND Objective 15: Actively manage pest plants on public land and promote the importance of controlling pest plants on private land.
Protection of current biodiversity, especially old growth habitat trees is very important, and this aspect of the strategy could be strengthened.	Action 5.1 on page 70 refers to embedding expert knowledge into development processes. This intent is to create better outcomes for vegetation retention on the private realm. This further includes reference to a review of Environmental Significance Overlays in which Banyule currently has a Significant Tree Overlay present. Important to recognise the link with the Urban Forest Strategy which details protection and retention around old growth significant trees.
We only get one chance to set a 10-year agenda, be brave and bold.	No further change to the Strategy
The Strategy overall is great, but I would like to see more ambition in restoration and habitat enhancement, including evidence-based goals and objectives that seek to increase species diversity and habitat complexity.	Updated information around ensuring maintenance of indigenous plants supporting this target and ensuring we retain our enhancements has been added on page 27 and Action 3.5 wording has changed to include advice around maintenance of indigenous species. This target was realised through extensive consultation and research to allow for the maintenance element of revegetation projects.

This Strategy is so well thought through, so well consulted and so well structured. I'm excited to see it sail through Council and be celebrated by the community.	No further change to the Strategy
Banyule has the opportunity to enhance the well-being of its residents and its wildlife by utilising the open spaces that will be returned to the community at the end of NELA construction. These areas can be rehabilitated and at the NELA expense, a prime example of this would be AK Lines Reserve and the adjacent land. The Council plans a subdivision between AK Lines and Watsonia Primary on the open land that once had plenty of trees and birdlife like Tawny Frog mouths, gang-gang cockatoos, lorikeets etc. This land could be used as an urban forest to bring back the birdlife and it could also be used to enhance the well-being of residents against the large concrete walls associated with NELA.	Action 5.4 on page 70 refers to the need for continued advocacy and partnership with NELP. The Strategy directly references the impact of vegetation removal on page 47.
I think a link between Gardens for Wildlife and Schools for Wildlife would be good.	Link has been included in reference to action
More support is required for local indigenous nursery VINC. This organisation provides a huge range of our plants in Banyule, yet staff work in a tiny shed and pay enormous amounts of rent to Parks Victoria. Funding and advocacy is important to keep this crucial biodiversity resource provider working to help underpin our biodiversity raw materials, indigenous plants!	VINC is a valued partner like Nangak Tamboree Wildlife Sanctuary which provides indigenous stock to Banyule projects. The role of the Strategy is to not directly create actions around financially supporting private business. Both indigenous nurseries will continue to be critical suppliers for species distribution throughout Banyule which Council will continue to support. No further change to the Strategy.
Please include education sessions for local residents in the program, i.e., evening talks or spotlight walks to learn about our Flagship species.	Theme 4
This document needs to be clearer about how this it going to impact from what is different today as a result of the banner initiative 250,000. It also needs to measure successful planting and habitat formation at a future point in time rather than simply getting a plant in the ground. There is ample evidence of what well-meaning planting programs fail particularly without expert advice in the implementation (e.g., how are you going to build capacity to ensure proper planting etc in the community) and follow up maintenance in future years.	Updated information around ensuring maintenance of indigenous plants supporting this target and ensuring we retain our enhancements has been added on page 27 and Action 3.5 wording has changed to include advice around maintenance of indigenous species. This target was realised through extensive consultation and research to allow for the maintenance element of revegetation projects.

4.2 Environmental Friends Group Feedback with Written Submissions.

Environmental Friends of Groups were invited to a focus group session to provide feedback on each of the five Thems, their goals, objectives and actions. Table 5 details the summarised comments from this session and written feedback provided from other Environmental Friends Group members.

Summarised Feedback	Officer Response and Strategy Adjustment
Knowledge and Biodiversity	
Need for a clear understanding of the current biodiversity landscape in Banyule. Outlined the Importance of assessing key biodiversity sites and providing context to inform future actions.	First paragraph on page 15 adjusted to outline the Banyule's Biodiversity section reflects where we are now.
Terms like Flagship, Iconic, Significant species, and planning overlays (VPO, SLO, ESO) need clear definitions within the strategy.	Flagship species have been clarified on page 18 and terminology has been changed with all acronyms have been adjusted.
Emphasis on formal data collection, especially in wetlands and plant survival. Friends' groups' data should be integrated and potentially used in peer-reviewed publications. There should also be a more regular update other than the 5-year review cycle.	Biodiversity Monitoring Program will be designed in year 1 with clear metrics for analysis. Updates on the progress of the Strategy are listed to be annually through the State of Environment Report, outlined in page 25 and specific updates will be provided through BECAAC on a need's basis.
Addressed the need to manage heavily mown areas to improve biodiversity. The Strategy should better outline weed control actions, especially on private land.	Recognising the need to elevate the importance of Pest Plant and Animal actions, the Strategy has separated these into two new Objectives. Objective 14: Understand, plan, and manage the threats of pest animals (foreign and domestic) on our local biodiversity Including two new actions on Page 71 AND Objective 15: Actively manage pest plants on public land and promote the importance of controlling pest plants on private land.
Development of a Kangaroo Management Plan, especially considering urban encroachment and infrastructure projects. Consideration of indicator species and how to respond to positive data trends.	No further change to the Strategy

Preparing for climate change and drought conditions. Better understanding of how vegetation is changing and identifying resilient plant species.	Objective 3 and actions 1.7 and 1.8 on page 66 detail the response to climate change.
Enhancing our Biodiversity	
Importance of defining how success will be monitored for revegetation targets. Need for a balanced approach between maintenance, site preparation, and new planting. Suggestion to reframe targets based on desired environmental health rather than arbitrary numbers.	Updated information around ensuring maintenance of indigenous plants supporting this target and ensuring we retain our enhancements has been added on page 27 and Action 3.5 wording has changed to include advice around maintenance of indigenous species. This target was realised through extensive consultation and research to allow for the maintenance element of revegetation projects.
Emphasis on proper site preparation before planting. Education around preparation and plant selection is critical for long-term success.	
Calls to increase the 250,000-plant target—seen by some as too conservative. Need for more resources, including bush crews and volunteer support. Recognition of the value of self-sufficient community groups, but also a call for more council capacity to support them.	
Use of platforms like iNaturalist (iNat) to record plantings and avoid duplicating tools. Desire for a community portal/dashboard for both sharing information and receiving community input.	
Protecting our Biodiversity	
Stronger advocacy to developers and large-scale developments for biodiversity outcomes. Need to embed biodiversity in the Planning Scheme, especially referencing the Wildlife Corridor Plan. Educating developers and real estate agents early to prevent biodiversity loss.	Action 5.4 on page 70 refers to the need for continued advocacy and partnership with NELP. The Strategy directly references the impact of vegetation removal on page 47.
Current tree valuation is too focused on monetary worth—need to recognize ecological and collective value, especially in woodlands. Offset planting is seen as insufficient due to long establishment times. Calls to increase ambition in protecting existing vegetation and preventing species extinction (e.g., strengthening Goal 6).	Goal 6 has been improved to see no loss of all species. Offset action (5.3) seeks to retain offsets locally. Establishment will take time, but currently no local offset scheme exists. The Strategy stives to create an option to improve this.
Weed control on private and public land needs improvement. Council should lead by example with eradication programs and possibly enforce	Recognising the need to elevate the importance of Pest Plant and Animal actions, the Strategy has separated these into two new Objectives.

compliance. Concerns about pest species like foxes, Indian mynas, and Queensland fruit fly—need for coordinated management strategies.	Objective 14: Understand, plan, and manage the threats of pest animals (foreign and domestic) on our local biodiversity Including two new actions on Page 71 AND Objective 15: Actively manage pest plants on public land and promote the importance of controlling pest plants on private land.
Cat curfews and responsible pet ownership are key concerns. Need for education and resources to help residents create wildlife-safe spaces for cats. Challenges around enforcement and community disputes.	Objective 14: Understand, plan, and manage the threats of pest animals (foreign and domestic) on our local biodiversity Including two new actions on Page 71

Wellbeing and our Biodiversity

Desire for more environmental networking events to connect community members and groups. Opportunities for collaborative events between Council, Friends groups, and other local organisations (e.g. scouts, sports clubs).	Action 7.1 on page 73 reflects this need to elevate support for environmental volunteers.
Creation of a register and map of Friends groups and their areas of work to improve coordination and visibility. Helps avoid duplication, share knowledge, and attract new volunteers.	This currently exists on the Banyule Council website. A function of Action 7.1 will be to improve the visibility to all local Friends Groups.
Council assistance in promoting Friends group events through broader communication channels to reach new audiences. Strengthens the impact and reach of local environmental initiatives.	
Alignment with broader Council goals like the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and the “Healthy People, Healthy Planet” vision.	Improved alignment has been updated in page 9 and structure of how other plans and strategies aligns is on page 24.

Partnerships for Biodiversity

Increased support for capacity building, volunteer recruitment (especially younger people), and knowledge sharing. Better coordination and visibility of Friends groups to enhance their impact.	A function of Action 7.1 will be to improve the visibility to all local Friends Groups.
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Stronger advocacy to state agencies (e.g., VicTrack, NEL, Level Crossing Removal Authority) to protect significant biodiversity areas like swift parrot habitats. Push for alternative construction methods and early engagement to reduce environmental impacts.	Action 5.4 on page 70 refers to the need for continued advocacy and partnership with NELP. The Strategy directly references the impact of vegetation removal on page 47.
Concerns about weed spread along major roads and the need for improved state road maintenance. Call for joint advocacy and collaborative weed control with VicRoads and other agencies.	Objective 15: Actively manage pest plants on public land and promote the importance of controlling pest plants on private land.
Strengthening partnerships with Melbourne Water, universities, and other organisations for joint funding and land management. Highlighting the Yarra River's significance in Banyule and enhancing its presence in the strategy (e.g., Riverfest, Birrarung).	Specific reference is made to collaboration through Spring Outdoors with agencies along the Birrarung throughout the Strategy.

4.3 Community Biodiversity Working Group Feedback

The Community Biodiversity Working Group was invited back to a final workshop to provide their feedback on the Strategies five Themes, including their goals, objectives and actions. Table 6 details the summerised response from this session.

Summerised Comments	Officer Response and Adjustments to the Strategy
Knowledge and Biodiversity	
Clarify timelines for action delivery (e.g., Year 1, Year 2) and assess feasibility.	Updates on the progress of the Strategy are listed to be annually through the State of Environment Report, outlined in page 25 and specific updates will be provided through BECAAC on a need's basis.
Create a live website feature track and share progress with the community.	Action 2.2 on page 67 has been updated to reflect this.
Implement a rapid assessment methodology. Use baseline data from the Biodiversity Monitoring Program to support early funding opportunities	Biodiversity Monitoring Program will be designed in year 1 with clear metrics for analysis.
Strengthen language around integration of strategies, plans and internal reporting. Reduce jargon and explain acronyms more clearly (e.g., ESO, and terms like BSUD).	Terminology has been changed with all acronyms referenced correctly.

Enhancing our Biodiversity

Explain how the 250k target was determined, including a breakdown and associated risks (e.g., drought), and outline how it can be adjusted if needed. Ensure the target focuses on biodiversity-rich areas rather than general coverage. Include aquatic species in planning.

Updated information around ensuring maintenance of indigenous plants supporting this target and ensuring we retain our enhancements has been added on page 27 and Action 3.5 wording has changed to include advice around maintenance of indigenous species. This target was realised through extensive consultation and research to allow for the maintenance element of revegetation projects.

Increase community touchpoints and calls to action. Develop a plan to grow and support community groups for local environmental enhancement.

Actions uplifting the Spring Outdoors Program are referenced in the Wellbeing and our Biodiversity Theme.

A function of Action 7.1 will be to improve the visibility to all local Friends Groups.

Apply ecological restoration principles aligned with National Standards. Advocate for more indigenous plantings in local projects. For the Hurstbridge feasibility study, prioritize indigenous species and integration with adjacent gardens.

Biodiversity Monitoring Program will be designed in year 1 with clear metrics for analysis. National standards will be recognised and considered.

Protecting our Biodiversity

Use flagship species to inspire action but emphasize protection of *all* flora and fauna. Recognise and consolidate citizen science efforts (e.g., Powerful Owl monitoring) into a unified action.

Flagship species information as been adjusted on page 18 to recognise this suggestion.

Account for future major project impacts, including biodiversity-focused landscaping, follow-up planting, and maintenance commitments. Embed biodiversity knowledge and decision-making pathways in development planning. Update planning recommendations to mandate vegetation protection and enhancement.

The Strategy includes a specific theme around the protection of our natural environment. Action 5.1 on page 70 has been created to ensure Council are being proactive in the protection of vegetation in the private realm.

Review overlays to ensure biodiversity language is clear and prioritized. Look to a metric that requires indigenous vegetation in all new developments.

Establish “no-go zones” dedicated to biodiversity and unstructured natural activity.

Wellbeing and our Biodiversity

Re-wild areas near active recreation zones, linking to the Wildlife Corridor Plan and increase recognition and support for unstructured, passive nature-based recreation.

Action 4.1 on page 69 details the need to develop a Wildlife Corridor Plan which will inform areas for biodiversity improvements.

Important to recognise that the Public Realm Framework ensures connection through the public realm is critical in its future direction.

Incorporate more indigenous elements into recreational projects and identify opportunities to enhance biodiversity within existing spaces.

Action 8.4 on page 74 reflects this.

Partnerships for Biodiversity

Advocate for stronger biodiversity protections under the EPBC Act

Action 5.4 on page 70 refers to the need for continued advocacy and partnership with NELP. The Strategy directly references the impact of vegetation removal on page 47.

Explore partnerships with private enterprise as an opportunity to get more funding into the environment sector.

Council would require a strong due diligence process to undertake partnership with private industry. This is a consideration that can be taken into the ongoing planning of projects for the actions in the Biodiversity Strategy.

Develop a prospectus linked to open space masterplans to attract investment.

Action 4.3 added on page 69.