Caring for Rosanna Parklands

Community Engagement findings report
February 2026



Banyule
City Council

1. Acknowledgement of Country

Banyule City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the land that is now Rosanna Parklands, and we pay our respects to Elders past and present. We recognise their enduring relationship with this Country its waterways, grasslands, trees and wildlife and the deep knowledge and stewardship that has cared for these landscapes over countless generations.

Rosanna Parklands sits within this living cultural landscape. Its open spaces, creek corridors and remnant bushland continue to reflect the values, practices and responsibilities of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, whose custodianship shapes how we understand, protect and care for Country today. As we plan for the future of the Parklands, we honour this ongoing connection by committing to approaches grounded in respect, ecological care and shared responsibility for the land.



The bushland setting at Rosanna Parklands

2. Executive summary

Rosanna Parklands is one of Banyule's most valued open spaces, appreciated for its natural character, strong community use and ecological significance. Located on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country, Council acknowledges Elders past and present and the enduring custodianship that continues to guide how the Parklands are understood, protected and cared for today.

To safeguard the park's unique values, Council is preparing a Management Plan that will focus on ongoing care, restoration and sensitive improvements distinct from a master plan, which typically emphasises new development. This approach will ensure future decisions remain environmentally responsible and aligned with community expectations.

Between 17 November and 21 December 2025, Council received 747 contributions through surveys, social mapping, school workshops, guided tours and targeted discussions with residents, Champions Groups, First Nations Mums and the Friends of Salt Creek. This feedback highlighted what people value, the issues they experience, and priorities for future management.

What the community values most

Seven consistent themes emerged:

1. The natural bushland character and sense of refuge
2. Off lead dog walking and social connection
3. Health and wellbeing benefits of exercise and time in nature
4. Informal play and exploration, especially for children
5. Creek health, wildlife and biodiversity
6. A strong sense of community and belonging
7. Bike jumps and youth recreation as spaces for independence and skill building

Key issues and concerns

Community feedback highlighted:

1. Toilets: Consistently raised with diverse views including support, opposition and safety considerations
2. Amenity gaps: Shade, seating, drinking water and gathering areas
3. Creek health: Pollution, erosion and water quality
4. Shared safety: Dog management, path condition, flooding and visibility in winter
5. Access and inclusion: Narrow or uneven paths, limited rest points, lack of signage and no accessible entrances
6. Lighting: Mixed views regarding safety vs. protecting dark habitat
7. Bike jumps: Strong support for retaining them with clearer management and safety improvements

Emerging priorities for the Management Plan

Across engagement activities, the community expressed a clear desire for:

1. Protection and restoration of natural areas, especially around Salt Creek
2. Improved accessibility, including safer paths, clearer signage and inclusive play options
3. Targeted improvements to amenities that support longer, more comfortable visits
4. Clarity in shared use zones, particularly regarding dogs and playground separation
5. Stewardship and education, including habitat protection, cultural learning and community led care

The engagement demonstrates strong alignment between community aspirations, Council strategies and the long-term vision for the Parklands. The findings will directly inform the development of draft principles and recommended actions for the Rosanna Parklands Management Plan.

3. Background

3.1 The Project

Rosanna Parklands is a large, linear open space located between Rosanna and Macleod, forming an important green corridor that connects neighbourhoods, the train station, and local destinations. Formerly a golf course, the parklands are now valued as a naturalistic landscape offering walking and cycling routes, informal play, off lead dog walking, bush land experiences and nature connection, environmental education and community connection.

This project responds to the need for a coordinated approach to future decision making for Rosanna Parklands; one that balances growing community use with environmental protection, inclusion and long term sustainability. At present, management of the parklands is often siloed and driven by asset renewal, lacking an overarching framework to guide holistic care of the landscape.

The management plan will address this gap. It aims to improve access, amenity and inclusion across the park while safeguarding its valued naturalistic character. The project also reflects strong community interest in balancing recreation, environmental stewardship and shared use within a growing and diversifying catchment. This approach aligns with Council's commitment to providing open spaces that are accessible, safe, welcoming and responsive to community needs.

3.2 Key stakeholders in this engagement

With a depth of connection and commitment by the local community that is unlike any other in Banyule, targeted engagement with key stakeholder is paramount to the success of the management plan.

Key stakeholders include

- Friends of Salt Creek and Associated Parklands
- Rosanna Primary School
- Rosanna Golf Links Primary School
- Banyule Schools Campfire Conversations
- Young people in the park
- Community contributors to the bike jumps
- Residents
- Banyule City Council staff
- Ward Councillor
- Banyule Champions Group members
- Community nesting box monitoring groups (Supported by Montmorency Biodiversity Group)
- First Nations community

Banyule Champions Groups

Banyule Council has an established Connected Communities Advisory Committee. The mission of the Connected Communities Advisory Committee is to promote respect, inclusion, understanding and unity. It guides Council's inclusive practices and health and wellbeing priorities. Four Champions Groups have been established for people who prefer to meet informally to share their knowledge and insights. Champions Group members work with Council and offer their lived experience and local insights to help Council shape projects, planning and engagement processes.

The Champions Groups provide advice to the relevant advisory committee and Council. Two Champions Groups bus tours visited 3 open space projects including Rosanna Parklands in October and November 2025, providing

further valuable insights that have been summarised in this report. Champions groups who engaged in the bus tours included age friendly, LGBTIQA+, multicultural champions and disability champions.



Champion Group bus tour at Rosanna Parklands

3.3 Scope of engagement

This engagement was designed to gather community insights in the form of local knowledge gathering on elements directly influencing how Rosanna Parklands is used and experienced. In scope were play and recreation opportunities, amenities, accessibility, safety, environmental values and the overall character of the park.

Topics such as broader Council policies, funding allocations, and infrastructure projects not associated with Rosanna Parklands were intentionally out of scope, as they sit within separate strategic or operational processes.

3.4 A note on data interpretation

Percentages refer to respondents who mentioned a theme, not levels of agreement. Percentages presented in this report are based on individual online and intercept survey responses only and reflect thematic mentions across open text responses rather than single choice questions. As many respondents raised multiple issues, percentages do not total 100%, providing a more accurate reflection of community sentiment. Feedback from school workshops, Banyule Champions Group tours, emails, in person discussions and the online interactive map was analysed qualitatively to validate themes, identify spatial patterns and inform location specific management responses. Interactive map contributions were not converted into the main percentages due to the potential for multiple entries by individual participants.

The online survey asked participants about how they currently use Rosanna Parklands, what they value most about the space, and any issues or barriers that affect their experience. Questions explored perceptions of safety, access and inclusion, environmental health, amenities (such as toilets, shade, seating and drinking water),

dog use and shared spaces, play and recreation (including bike riding), and comfort across seasons. Respondents were also invited to suggest improvements and identify considerations Council should prioritise in a future management plan. Basic demographic information was collected to understand who participated and to support interpretation of results.

4. Methodology

4.1 The approach

Engagement activities were conducted between 17 November and 21 December 2025 and included a range of mix methods to engage broad views. People engaged included children and young people, families, older adults, people with disability, dog owners, regular commuters, and local residents from Rosanna, Macleod, Heidelberg Heights and surrounding suburbs. Promotion occurred via Shaping Banyule, letter drops to surrounding suburbs, Council communications, project signage at the Parklands, schools and local networks.

4.2 Engagement objectives

The engagement process was guided by the following objectives:

- To understand how different community members currently use Rosanna Parklands
- To identify what people value most about the parklands
- To understand gaps, barriers and safety concerns limiting use
- To identify priorities for future improvements that support inclusion, access and environmental care
- To ensure children and young people could meaningfully contribute their ideas
- To gather input that can inform a future management plan and staged improvements

4.3 Engagement activities and participation

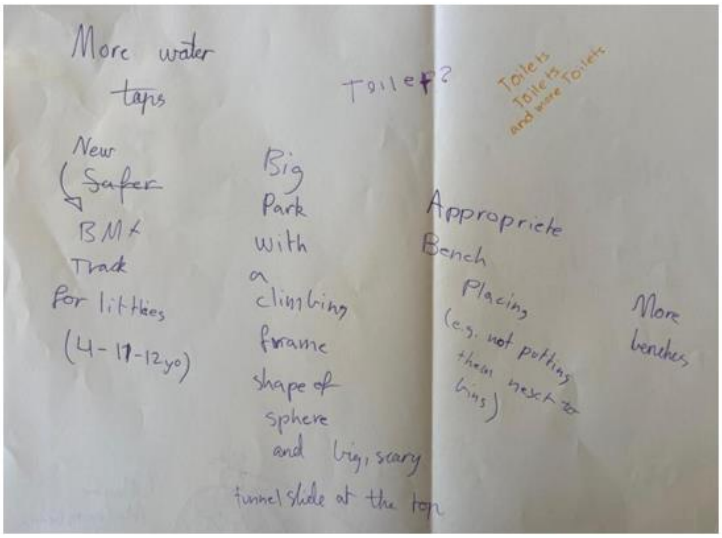
Engagement activities resulted in over 740 individual contributions: one of the highest participation rates in Council's history. Engagement was delivered using a mixed methods approach to ensure both breadth and depth of input, including:

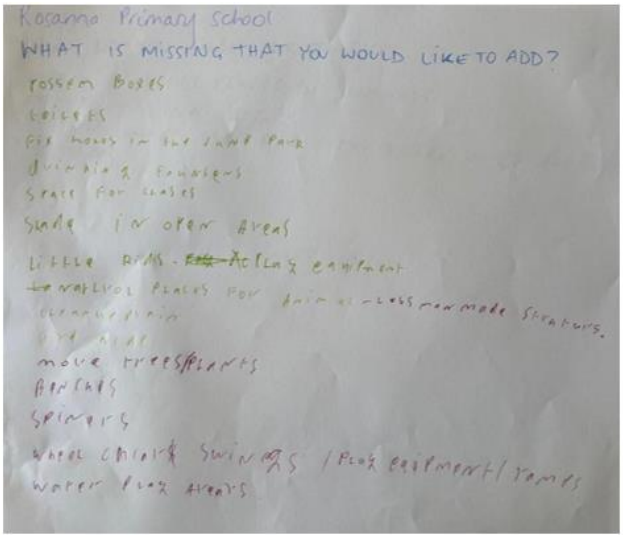
- Over 1400 individuals visited the project webpage
- 541 individual online survey responses
- 81 social map contributions, providing spatially specific feedback
- 23 conversations in the park conducted over four days
- One mailed response
- Attendance at nesting box monitoring
- Correspondence by email / phone calls with 6 local residents
- School workshops with 76 children across grades 2, 3 and 5
- Two Banyule Champions Group bus tours involving 17 participants
- Targeted consultation with 3 First Nations Mums
- Targeted consultation with Friends of Salt Creek and Associated Parklands
- Preliminary meeting with Wurundjeri Corporation Cultural Consultation team



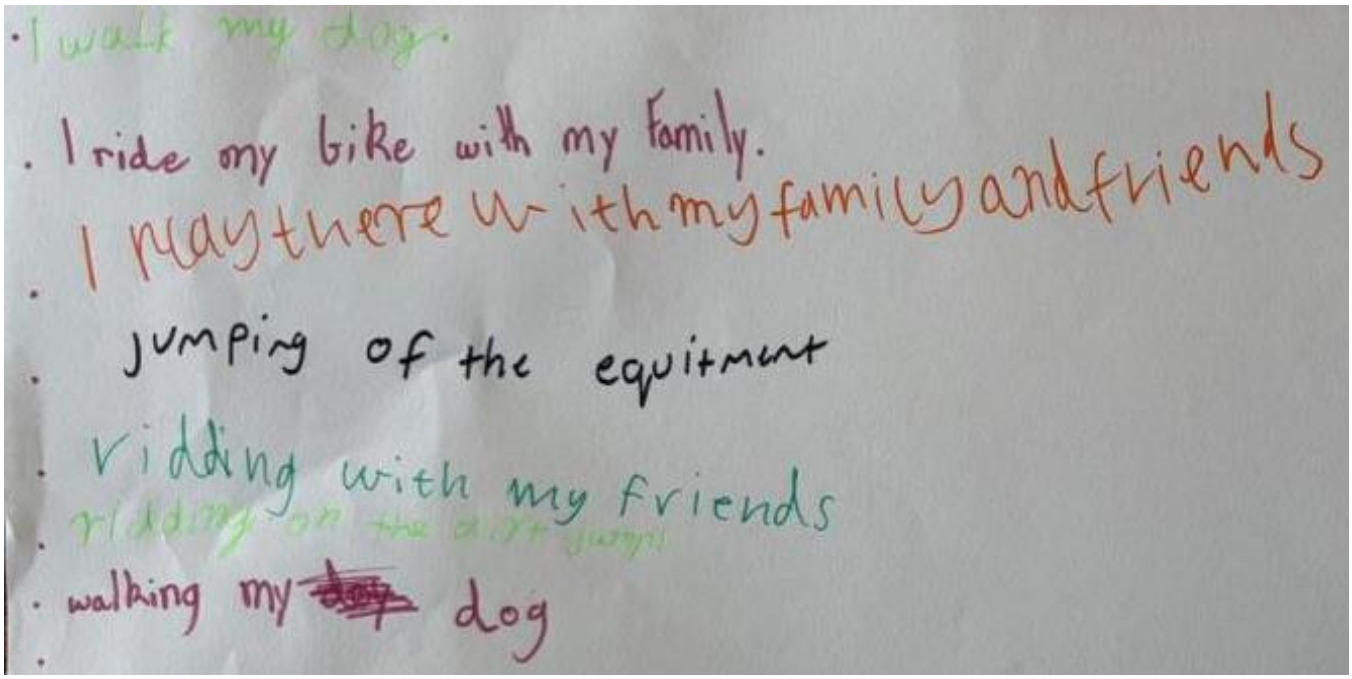


Left: Rosanna Golf Links Primary School students and right: Rosanna Primary School Students sharing ideas about the Parkland.





Above: Examples of ideas generated by school students about what they would like to add to the Parklands

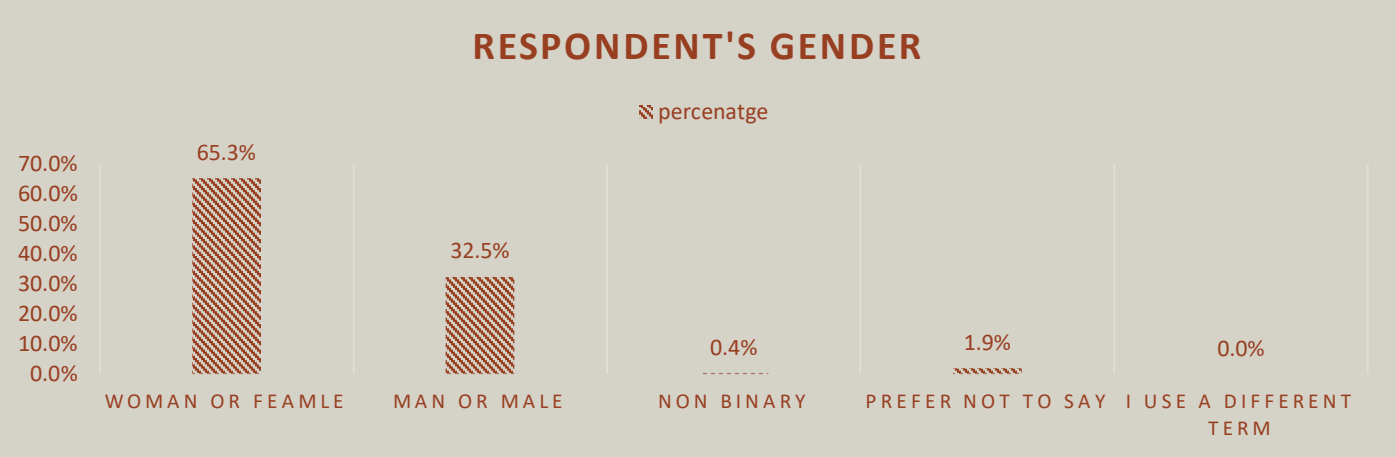


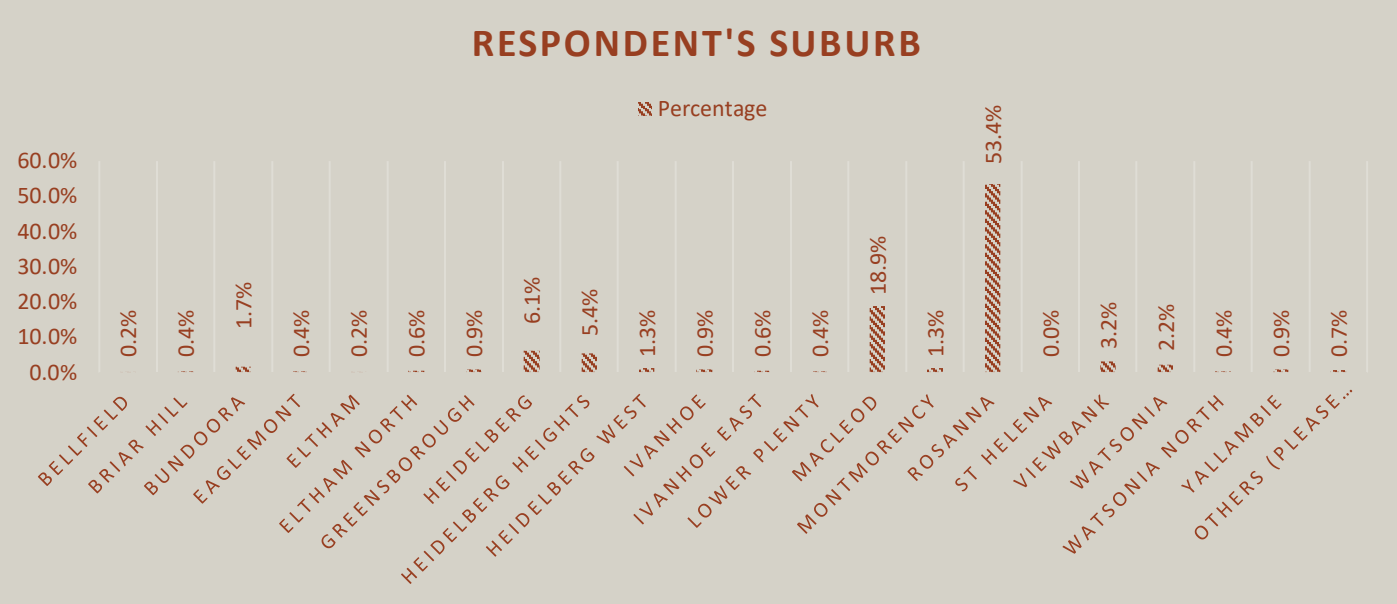
Some examples of how children use the park

5. Demographic snapshot

While survey respondents were predominantly adults and older adults, the engagement design intentionally included children through school workshops and older adults, those living with a disability and identifying as LGBTIQA+ through Banyule Champions Group Members.

Adolescents and young adults were less represented, however targeted park engagement and a youth bike case study provided qualitative insight into youth use and priorities. Further engagement with youth should take place to inform any changes to the bike jumps.





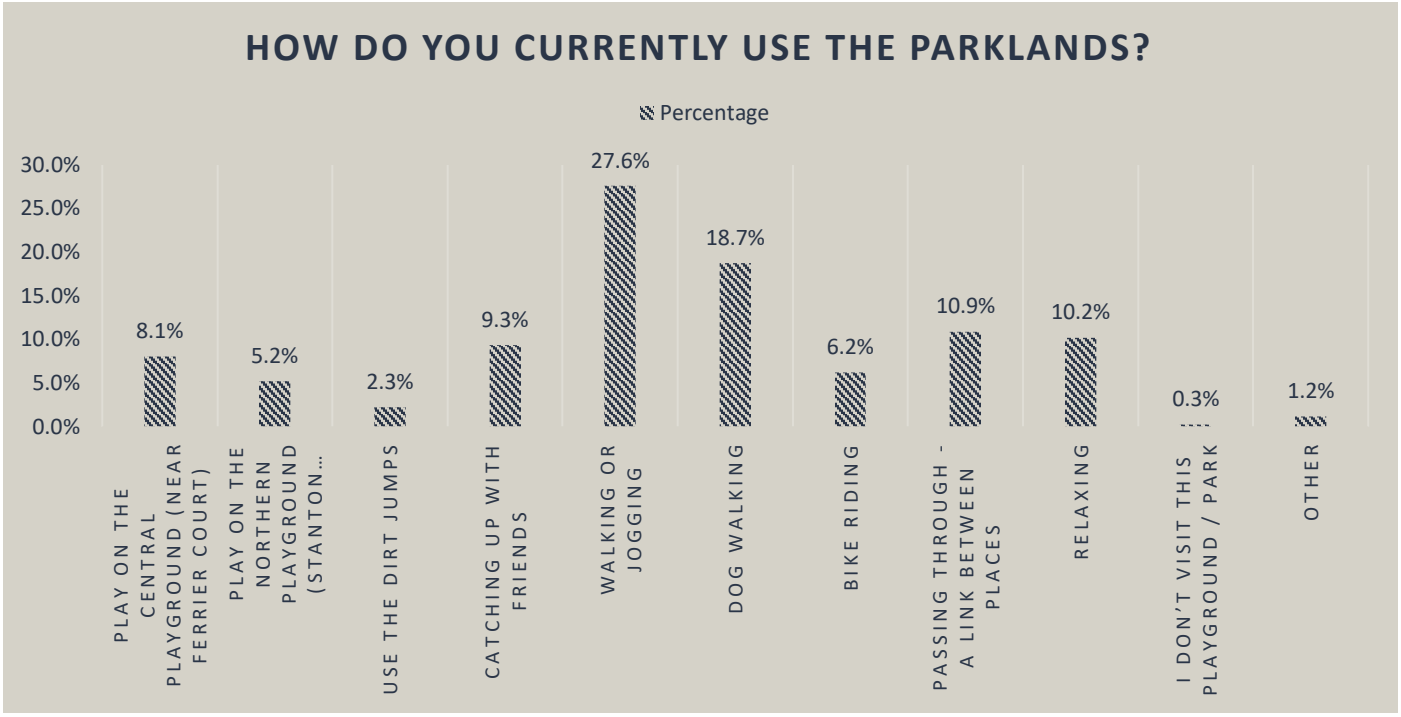
Graphs depicting online survey data.

6. Key themes throughout the feedback

6.1 Natural features and biodiversity

The online survey strongly reinforced that the natural character of Rosanna Parklands is one of its most valued attributes, with respondents consistently describing the park as a “natural haven” and a rare example of

substantial bushland within a suburban context. These findings align with, and add depth to, feedback received through schools, Champions Group members and the social map.



Online survey data showing how people use the park

Environmental values were raised by 56% (314 people) of survey respondents.

With appreciation for:

- the density and maturity of trees, which contribute to shade, cooling and a strong bushland character
- birdlife, frogs and native animals, including possums, tawny frogmouths and geckos
- the creek corridor and bushland areas as places of calm, exploration and connection to nature
- informal trails that feel natural and unstructured, rather than highly formalised

35% (190 people) survey respondents called for environmental restoration

Many survey respondents expressed sentiments to "leave it as it is" and "do as little as possible" to protect natural attributes. Many respondents expressed a clear desire that future management prioritise protection and restoration, rather than introducing changes that could diminish the park's ecological character or sense of wildness.

6.2 Protection, habitat creation and wildlife support

Survey respondents demonstrated strong and consistent support for active environmental stewardship, particularly where degradation or risk to wildlife was perceived. School students aligned with these priorities, which included:

- weed management, especially along the creek line
- habitat protection, including erosion control and limiting access to sensitive areas
- maintaining existing nesting boxes for birds and possums and installation of additional ones
- cleaner water systems, including protecting the creek from pollution and sewerage overflow
- planting additional indigenous vegetation to strengthen habitat corridors

"Please stop using Round Up. It's unhealthy for everything and everyone..."

"Creek has debris... needs clearing..."

While access to nature was highly valued, many respondents emphasised the importance of clear boundaries to protect sensitive areas. Residents advocated for habitat creation and ecological restoration, improved frog and duck habitat, and stronger protections from pests. We heard a call for stronger and more explicit "wildlife safety" with concerns including:

- repeated dumping of food and groceries in bushland areas, with fears that dogs and wildlife are ingesting harmful items
- creek debris following heavy rain events
- the impacts of dogs, cats and foxes on native species

"Pest control for foxes... precious wildlife being hunted at night... fox dens along Salt Creek."

"Enforce the cat curfew... I see cats all the time and they are killing wildlife."

"Put an end to the flow of chemicals into Salt Creek so that the ducks and frogs can return."

"Maybe have a couple of dog no go areas to give reptiles a chance?"

Many of these concerns were most strongly concentrated around Salt Creek, which emerged as the primary location where environmental degradation, habitat loss and safety risks intersect.





Right: A family of Krefft's gliders utilising the nesting boxes

6.3 Creek health, water quality and erosion

27% (151 people) of survey respondents mentioned creek health as a significant concern.

With respondents linking erosion, pollution and dog access to long term environmental degradation and safety risks. 11% of survey respondents called for water management.

"Immediately address the erosion of the banks of Salt Creek... very severe..."

"Water quality... polluted and smelly... odd colour... illegal dumping..."

"Creek has debris... needs clearing out near the bridge..."

"Erosion is a real threat to some of the mature trees along the creek..."

Several respondents offered practical, balanced solutions that acknowledge existing behaviours while seeking to reduce environmental harm:

> "Landscape it with rocks to allow dogs to still swim but not erode..."



Erosion along the Salt Creek within Rosanna Parklands

6.4 Vegetation composition, heritage and ecological balance

The online survey surfaced some tensions around vegetation management, particularly regarding introduced pine and cypress trees. Minority of respondents strongly advocated for full indigenous restoration:

> "Please remove all the introduced Pine and Cyprus trees in the Parklands; they are an eye sore and suck excess moisture from the soil. Replace them with indigenous native trees."

In contrast, a minority of respondents emphasised the heritage and ecological value of non-indigenous species, particularly for bird life and the site's golf course history:

> "The cockatoos also really like the pine trees and the pinecones. Don't be 100% indigenous. Some botanical tree variety is nice (5%) and the pine trees were part of the golf course history."

This feedback highlights differing community views on ecological purity versus heritage continuity, suggesting the need for management principles that allow for nuanced, site-specific decisions rather than blanket approaches. Other concerns raised about tree health and maintenance:

"There's substantial tree die-off... investigate and rectify/replant." and provide "better soil or watering of trees"

6.5 Education, stewardship and connection to nature

Community reinforced strong interest in learning through the park, particularly among families, children and older adults.

Respondents supported:

- educational signage about local plants, animals and birdlife
- information about frogs, water quality and native species
- learning about First Nations connections to Country and caring for land

Children's feedback (from schools) aligned strongly with survey themes, emphasising stewardship and intergenerational responsibility:

"My grandfather, dad and I really care and are involved in protecting wildlife. Please put a sign up with a number so people know who to call if animals are injured"

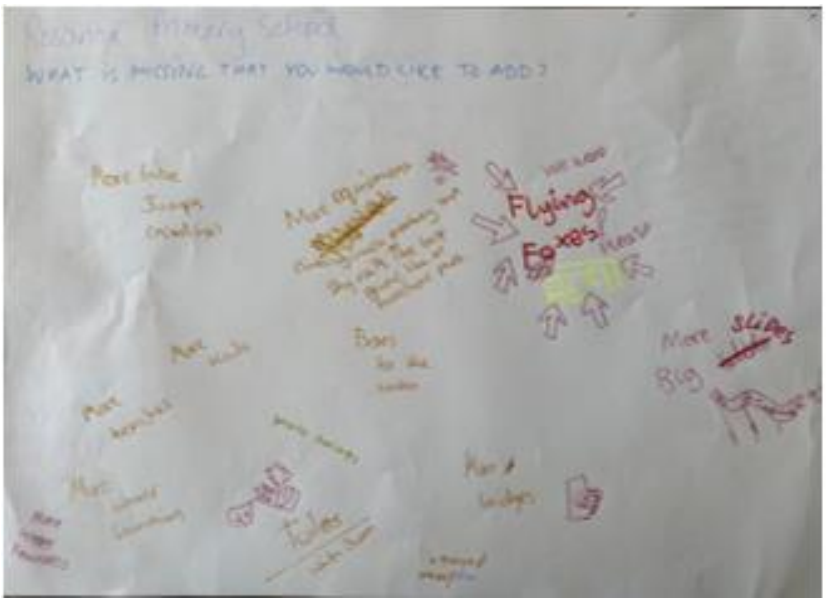
"Don't let people destroy the animal's habitat."

Schools visited the Parklands regularly for learning activities and expressed interest in a space they could sit together under shade, learn and eat together.

The survey also highlights that while values are strongly shared, opinions differ on how protection should be achieved, underscoring the importance of clear, transparent and principled decision making within the future management plan.

6.6 Park amenities

Requests for drinking taps, seating, tables and shade reflected a consistent message across the consultation. Community members want Rosanna Parklands to support longer, more inclusive visits while maintaining its natural character. These amenities were most strongly prioritised by children, families, older adults and people with disability, and align closely with Council's objectives relating to accessibility, public health, social inclusion and climate resilience. While most respondents supported improvements to amenities, some respondents wanted minimal intervention; others emphasised the importance of ensuring any additions are sensitively located and well maintained, so they do not detract from the park's natural character.



Examples of students notes identifying amenities as key requirements to add to the Parkland

6.6.1 Toilets

Currently, there are no public toilets in the park. The closest public toilets are at Macleod Village Reserve (535m north of Chapman Street) and at Rosanna Train Station to the south across Lower Plenty Road.

Public toilets were one of the most reoccurring topics in the consultation, though views were varied.

All 76 school children, First Nations Mums and a most of the Banyule Champions Group members who visited the parklands mentioned the need for toilets at Rosanna Parklands.

This feedback aligns with the Banyule Public Toilet Plan 2023, which identifies the provision of public toilets within a walkable distance (approximately 400 metres) of well utilised open spaces as critical to supporting equitable access, dignity and participation.

Based on analysis of open text survey and social map responses:

Support for toilets in the park
Approximately 152 respondents (approximately 30%) to the survey clearly supported the provision of toilets. This support was linked to dignity, accessibility and the ability to stay longer in the park. It was particularly strong among families with young children, older adults, runners, people with disability, school communities and parents including First Nations Mums.

Where toilets were mentioned, most comments related to the following key needs:

- the ability to stay longer in the park
- accessibility for children, older adults and people with health needs
- use of the park for picnics, school activities and family outings

Participants consistently described the absence of toilets as a key barrier to use, particularly for families with young children, older adults and people with disability.

> "We don't go there because there are no toilets." (First Nations Mum)

> "People, especially the elderly, are not coming to the park because there is no toilet." (Champions Group Member)

> "We would stay longer and picnic if there were toilets." (Survey respondent)

> "If there could be toilets at the park, that would be amazing so we don't have to take kids back to school mid experience." (School Principal)

The survey responses also highlighted practical day to day impacts:

> "We have to carry a travel potty... because they might need to go..."
> "Train station toilets need to be open at 5.30am... (from first train till last train)."

Respondents emphasised the importance of balancing any additional infrastructure with maintaining the park's natural character and heritage values.

> "No toilets at Ferrier as near heritage listed roads. Toilets would be good at northern playground - where it is near road." (Survey respondent)

> "...any inclusion of public toilets must be considered carefully and the location chosen (if determined a requirement) to reflect a high level of visibility from passing road traffic to ensure State and local authority enforcement can be upheld." (Survey respondent)

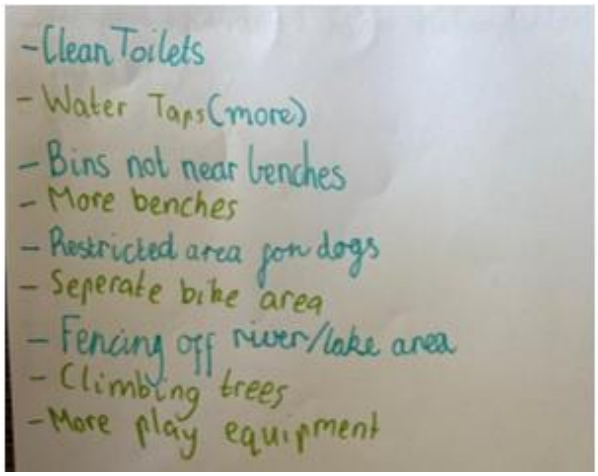
Concerns about toilets

Approximately 27 of the 561 survey respondents (less than 5%) opposed the provision of toilets at Rosanna Parklands. While this group represented a small minority, their concerns were strongly held and centred on several key issues. Most commonly, respondents expressed worries about potential safety risks and the possibility that a toilet facility could attract antisocial behaviour if not carefully located and monitored. Others highlighted the financial implications for Council, noting that ongoing maintenance, cleaning and repairs could place an unnecessary burden on resources. Some respondents felt that introducing built infrastructure, such as a toilet block, could detract from the landscape's naturalistic feel. Together, these concerns reflect a desire to preserve the park's existing character and minimise interventions that could change how the space feels or functions.

> "...please NO toilets near Ferrier playground. There are toilets less than 10 min walk away at Rosanna Station. Please do not ruin look of parklands and decrease safety by adding toilets in centre of park" (Survey respondent)

> "Do not provide a toilet block in the Parklands (unnatural, unsightly, unsafe, graffiti and smelly). If absolutely necessary, consider placing the proposed toilet block in Ellesmere Pde opposite David St where cars often park, street lighting exists, bicycle path users can access, safety and maintenance access is improved." (Survey respondent)

Overall, toilets were raised as a core inclusion and equity measure, rather than a discretionary amenity. The absence of toilets was repeatedly linked to dignity, safety, participation and length of stay, particularly for people over 60 and people with disability.





Additional ideas generated by school students which highlighted amenities

6.6.2 Drinking water taps

One third of survey respondents and all school students and Champions groups and noted on the social map calling for additional drinking water taps at regular intervals noting "only *one is inadequate."* Many highlighted the importance of water access for both people and dogs, particularly to reduce dogs entering the creek to drink and use of the parklands during warmer weather.

> "There's only one water station. More would stop dogs going into the creek to drink." (Survey respondent)

Children consistently requested "more drink taps", often linking them to bike riding, running and active play. Champions highlighted the need for clearly visible taps, including use of contrasting colours to improve accessibility for older adults and people with mobility challenges.

6.6.3 Tables, seating, gathering spaces and bins

Requests for tables and seating were raised by approximately one third of survey respondents, with particularly strong emphasis from older adults, people with disability, families and Champions. These requests were also raised by schools in relation to outdoor learning and group use, and were supported across the social map, particularly at quieter locations away from main paths.

Champions and older adults highlighted the need for seating at regular intervals, noting that the length of the park can be challenging without opportunities to rest. Several respondents noted that existing benches are often located too close to paths or bins, reducing comfort and usability.

The online survey introduced detailed operational feedback relating to waste management and maintenance, requesting:

> "Additional bins to reduce rubbish and dog poo..."

> "Dog bag facilities are mostly empty..."

> "Dispenser is very difficult to use... for more senior people."

There was strong support for:

- tables with backrests and arm supports
- seating oriented toward nature and the creek
- tables suitable for picnics, small gatherings and school use
- materials that dry quickly after rain

6.7 Shade and sheltered areas

Shade emerged as a critical comfort, safety and climate resilience issue, particularly in relation to playgrounds, picnic areas and gathering spaces. Shade was raised by approximately 30–40% of survey respondents, all school groups, and a strong majority of Banyule Champions Group members who visited the park. Parents and schools emphasised that lack of shade limits use during warmer months, particularly for younger children. Champions and older adults highlighted shade as essential for longer stays and safe walking.

> "As a sun smart school, shade is critical, especially if we want people to sit, eat and gather together." (School principal)

> "Central playground has no shade... basically unusable in summer... slide will burn you."

Participants supported a mix of natural shade through tree planting and shade structures over playgrounds, sheltered picnic and BBQ areas that can also support group activities.

6.8 Play and recreation

> "The playgrounds need major upgrades. The central playground has no shade and the equipment is outdated. It doesn't cater to all ages, toddlers or those with special needs, and it absolutely needs a fence."

Requests for enhanced play opportunities were raised by approximately 45% of survey respondents and by all school groups. 22% of survey respondents and all school children asked for playground upgrades.

Rosanna Parklands is already highly valued as a place for informal, adventurous and imaginative play, and participants consistently emphasised that future improvements should build on this character, rather than replace it with highly formalised or standardised play environments.18% directly called for fencing around

playgrounds to keep dogs and children separated. Further 15% asked for shading at the playgrounds to enable use.





Left: Community fairy doors at the Parklands. Right: signage mandating dog on lead within 5 meters of the playground

Children consistently articulated a desire for play that supports different ages, abilities and confidence levels, and that allows for exploration, challenge and creativity.

Limited play opportunities for children over the age of seven were noted, and that current provision does not adequately support toddlers or children with additional needs.

Commonly requested play elements included:

- large, challenging slides
- swings of different sizes, including higher swings for older children
- climbing structures, monkey bars and nets
- flying foxes and other large scale equipment
- in ground trampolines
- sandpits

As one grade 2 class explained:

> "We want lots of different swings, huge net ones, tyre swings and normal ones, and higher ones for older kids so we can get momentum and not hit the ground."

Beyond traditional playground equipment, there was a strong appetite for adventure play integrated into the landscape, using natural materials such as rocks, logs and earth forms. Inclusive play was also raised as an emerging but important theme, with specific requests for:

- play elements accessible to children with disability
- environments that support neurodiverse children *"add sensory activities for neurodiverse people. "*



Nature play in the Parklands

6.8.1 Learning through play and imagination

Children repeatedly described play as something that should be fun, imaginative and curiosity driven, not overly prescriptive. Schools and families highlighted the value of play that also supports informal learning, particularly connected to nature.

One class referenced a children's book about drop bears and suggested playful, imaginative elements such as warning signs about drop bears and games like pretending to apply Vegemite behind ears to "ward them off". Others spoke about enjoying nature-based treasure hunts, creative exploration, and learning through direct interaction with the environment.

Many children expressed a desire to learn more about plants, animals and habitats through play, requesting:

- signage that explains local wildlife
- opportunities to explore nature as part of play
- playful educational features such as a bird directory with photos and names



Example of standard playground equipment in the Parklands

6.8.2 Broader recreation opportunities

Requests for additional formal recreation facilities such as basketball courts, skate facilities or outdoor gyms were low in numbers, (generally raised by fewer than 3% of respondents). In contrast, bike related feedback focused less on introducing new facilitates and more on improving the safety, clarity and maintenance of existing areas. The exception was school children requesting more age-appropriate tracks to ride their bikes.

6.8.3 Youth Case Study: Bike jumps as a space for connection, skill building and belonging

Rosanna Parklands bike jumps emerged as a valued informal youth space, particularly for school aged children and teenagers. Two teenagers were engaged in November 2025 who described using the bike jumps for approximately six years. They described the area previously attracted up to 30 young boys and girls of various ages.

"We made new friends through riding."

"We spent many hours building jumps.. all day, every day."

They described the jumps as a place to develop skills, independence and friendships. However, a local resident/s had been destroying the jumps. The youth noted the repeated removal of the jumps significantly reduced participation by young people.

Current use of the bike jumps has dropped to a small group

"We'd come back and it was destroyed."

"It made us lose our love of sport."

"Now there's about six people that come."

Both young people expressed a strong desire to work cooperatively with Council, noting past compliance with fencing, bins and noise reduction.

"We've gone along with everything Council asked us to do...it's not fair that someone destroys our work."

They proposed practical, low cost solutions:

- Clear signage confirming to the community that bike jumps and building of them are permitted
- Access to dirt to rebuild jumps safely
- A nearby water tap

"If there was a sign saying it's legal and allowed, we'd take time to build them properly and wouldn't be scared they'd be destroyed."

All references to bike jumps in the survey were supportive of the jump track being retained in some fashion.

These experiences strongly reinforce the sentiments through the broader consultation.

Specifically:

- Majority of school students (72 children) identified bike riding and dirt jumps as one of the most important features of the park. They described the bike area as “fun”, “creative” and “the best part of the park”
- Approximately 10% of online survey respondents raised bike riding or jumps, despite adults being the dominant survey cohort
- Around 25% of social map contributors, including parents, referenced the bike area

Consultation also highlighted clear and consistent calls for improvement. While many children enjoy the challenge and freedom of the bike jumps, at least four younger school students asked for changes to improve safety and usability. As younger student noted *“teenagers have dug up the jumps, it needs fixing.”* Concerns raised by children and parents included large or uneven jumps, holes dug that are unsafe, rocks or slippery surfaces. Children wanted the jumps made safer and or smaller version created for younger children.

A key point of difference within the consultation related to how bike infrastructure should be managed into the future. While there was strong agreement that bike jumps should be retained, views differed on whether they should remain informal or be more professionally designed. Some participants supported formalisation to improve safety while others emphasised the importance of preserving youth led creativity and ownership:

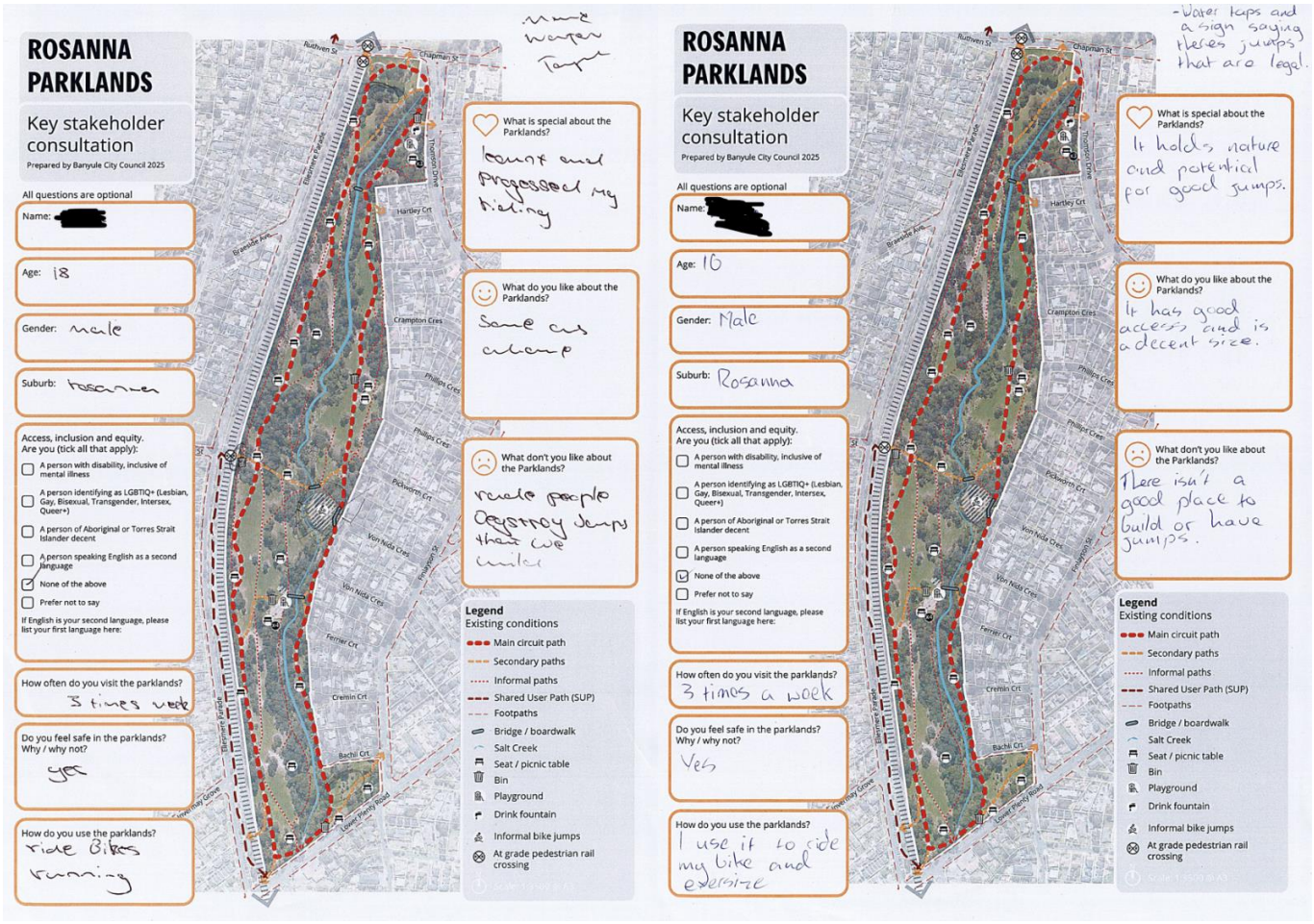
> “Let the kids enjoy their area for creating jumps and mounds.”

> “Fix the jumps. Build them properly so kids of all ages can ride.”

Despite these differing perspectives, there was strong consensus across all engagement methods for retaining bike jumps alongside a clear mandate to improve safety, maintenance, age appropriateness to support young people’s physical activity, connection and sense of belonging.



Left: School students advocating for support to make safer bike jumps accessible for all ages. Right: Bike jump track



Examples of intercept survey data received during intercept surveys completed at the park.

6.9 Inclusion and accessibility

Across all engagement methods, access and inclusion were not framed as specialist or 'add on' needs, but as core conditions for participation in Rosanna Parklands. Accessibility issues were raised by approximately 25–30% of survey respondents, by all Champions identifying with disability, and by both school groups and First Nations Mums. These issues were also reinforced through qualitative comments on the social map and online survey.

Accessibility issues were raised by 25–30% (140-168 people) of survey respondents

Key barriers identified included:

- no wheelchair accessible entrances
- lack of wayfinding and signage
- paths that are too narrow, uneven, muddy or affected by exposed roots
- flooding and drainage issues that reduce mobility
- lack of accessible and inclusive play equipment
- insufficient rest points for people who need to pause
- long distances between amenities
- the absence of toilets
- lack of inclusive seating, shade and drinking water, which was repeatedly linked to who does not use the park

Participants were clear that these barriers do not affect all users equally. Instead, they result in uneven access across the length of the park, with some people unable to safely or comfortably use large sections of Rosanna Parklands.

6.9.1 Access as an equity issue

Several respondents explicitly framed access and inclusion as an equity issue, noting that current conditions disproportionately exclude older adults, people who are frail, people with disability and those with chronic illness or fatigue. One respondent stated:

> "Make the Parklands accessible to all. It should not be that the elderly, frail and disabled can be excluded at the expense of dog walkers."

Others highlighted the practical impacts of inaccessible paths and surfaces:

> "Smooth out tree roots protruding on earthen pathways to avoid the elderly and young children tripping on"

Participants emphasised that improving access would:

- significantly broaden participation
- enable longer visits and group use
- support equity across ages and abilities
- align strongly with Council's inclusion, health and ageing objectives
- make the park feel welcoming to all community members

6.9.2 Transport, crossings and neighbourhood connectivity

Access to Rosanna Parklands is affected not only by internal paths, but also by the safety and ease of reaching the park from surrounding streets and destinations. Several respondents identified road crossings, traffic speed and cycling connectivity as barriers to safe and inclusive use, particularly for children, older adults, people with disability and families. It should be noted that while this consultation was taking place community consultation commenced for the Ruthven Street Level Crossing Removal Project. Maps were released as a part of this consultation depicting the inclusion of a proposed signalised pedestrian crossing at the northern end of the Parklands and extending the shared user path from Davies Street to Ruthven Street.

> "It's hard sometimes to cross the road to get to the Parklands during peak hours, so the accessibility can be improved" "It would be great if there could be a pedestrian crossing over Lower Plenty Road here."

> "Traffic slowing measures along Chapman Street would make it feel less threatening to cross."

> "Please build a dedicated bicycle path to make it safer and more convenient for people who ride bikes for passing parkland to library and station."

6.9.3 Inclusive play and shared spaces

Inclusive play was a consistent priority, particularly among schools, parents and Champions, and was raised by all school groups, approximately 20% of survey respondents, and a majority of Champions.

Children and adults consistently called for play equipment that "everyone can use", including:

- wheelchair accessible play equipment
- ramps instead of stairs
- basket swings and larger swings suitable for older children and adults
- inclusive seating and gathering spaces

A key barrier to inclusive play identified across engagement was perceived safety, particularly related to dogs near playgrounds. As one grade 3 student stated:

> "People are scared of dogs near the playground."

- Concerns about fencing, dog management and safety were raised by approximately 30–35% of survey respondents, as well as schools and Champions. Participants highlighted that the lack of clear separation between playgrounds and dog off lead areas results in missed opportunities for social inclusion and shared play.
- Common requests included fencing around playgrounds, clearer separation of dog on lead and off lead areas and signage.

6.9.4 Inclusion infrastructure: shade, water and seating

Shade, drinking taps and seating were consistently identified as essential inclusion infrastructure, not optional amenities. These needs were raised by approximately 45–50% of survey respondents, all school groups, and Champions, including older adults and people with disability. These features were repeatedly linked to who can stay, rather than simply who can pass through the park.

While the park is highly valued by many users, current conditions mean that some community members experience exclusion, particularly older adults, people with disability, families with young children and those with health or mobility needs. The feedback clearly positions access and inclusion as a matter of equity, highlighting the importance of addressing physical, social and perceptual barriers so the park can be used safely, comfortably and with dignity by people of all ages and abilities.

6.10 Safety

Most respondents reported feeling generally safe when using Rosanna Parklands. While only around 9% of survey respondents explicitly stated they feel unsafe, approximately one third of respondents raised safety concerns in a broader sense, most linked to dog behaviour, poor lighting in winter, path condition, and the presence of rough sleeping. These concerns were consistently echoed across Champions and school groups.

Safety concerns most frequently related to off lead dog behaviour (21%), path condition including flooding and exposed roots (13%), lighting and visibility at dusk and in winter (10–13%), rough sleeping or perceived anti-social behaviour (8–10%), bike speed or conflict (7%), personal safety concerns particularly for women and families (6–8%), and the potential safety risks associated with toilets if poorly located (7%).



Example of puddles formed near track.

6.11 Request for lighting and the importance of dark skies for wildlife protection

Community feedback highlighted a mix of opinion regarding the need for lighting at Rosanna Parklands. Around 10% of respondents identified poor lighting and low visibility as a safety concern, particularly during winter, while 13% supported targeted lighting along main paths. At the same time, a similar proportion (11%) emphasised the importance of keeping the park dark to protect wildlife and maintain its natural character.

"Please keep it a 'dark' park... this is vital that our native nocturnal birds and wildlife have a natural area not saturated with light pollution."

"It's too dark in winter, by 4pm I want to take my kids to the playground or ride the bike but we can't... Parents want to take their children out in winter"

"I don't feel safe by myself."

6.12 Dogs

Dogs were the most frequently raised safety related issue, particularly in relation to children, prams, people with disability and cyclists.

Approximately 21% of survey respondents explicitly raised off lead dogs as a safety concern

Most commonly citing dogs entering playgrounds, lack of recall or voice control, fear for young children, impacts on wildlife and Salt Creek, and difficulty comfortably using paths.

A broader group of respondents (around 26%) raised dog related concerns overall, including behavioural issues, environmental impacts and usability challenges, even where these were not framed strictly as personal safety risks. Within this group, approximately 16% made explicit calls for changes to management, such as leash requirements, fencing, or clearer segregation of uses.

"The main playground has dogs off lea run through it all the time, scaring my daughter. It needs a fence."

"I have mild vision impairment...can't identify unleashed dogs...causing tripping...I fell..."



Dog and it's owner enjoying a walk in the Parklands.

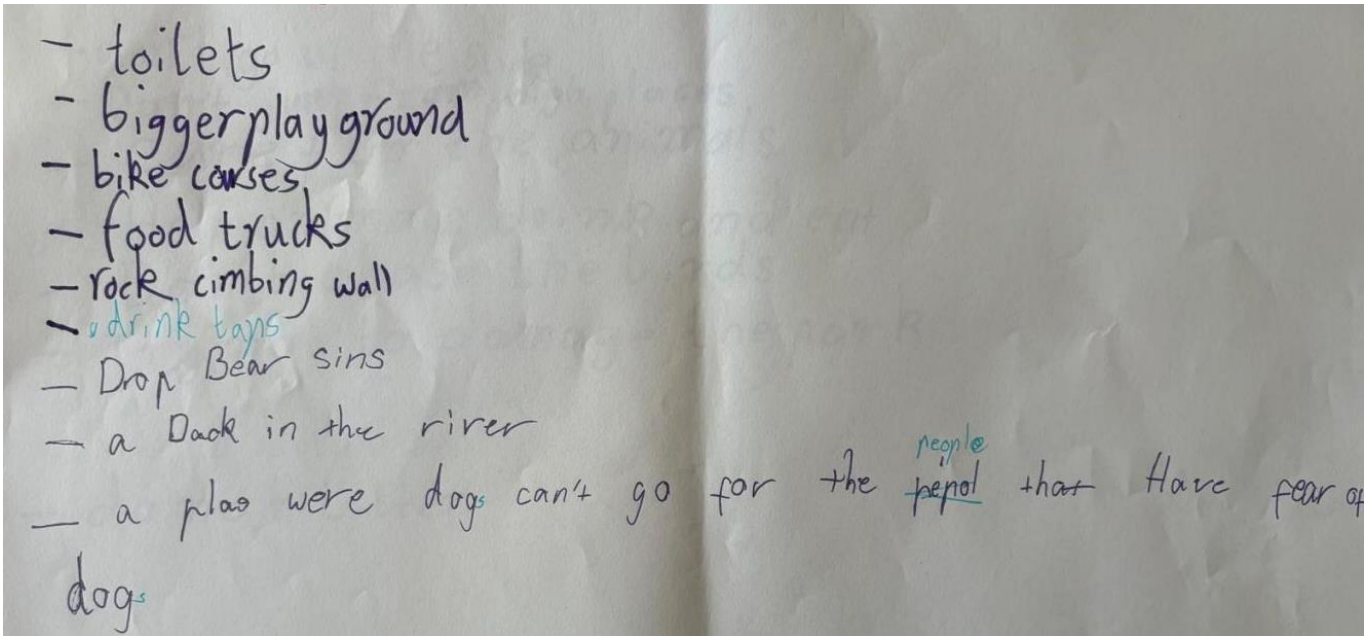
At the same time, a strong and vocal minority expressed concern that safety interventions could undermine the park's role as an off lead dog space. These respondents emphasised social connection, responsible ownership and community wellbeing.

> "This park is a haven for people and dogs. The freedom for dogs supports mental health, social connection and daily exercise, that's what makes Rosanna Parklands special."

Importantly, concerns about dogs did not equate to opposition to off lead access. Around 47% of respondents who raised dog related issues simultaneously expressed support for retaining off lead access, emphasising its importance to the park's identity, mental and physical health benefits, and its role as a key social connector, particularly for older residents.

Around 47% of respondents who raised dog related issues simultaneously expressed support for retaining off lead access.

Across viewpoints, there was strong agreement on practical mitigations, with both supporters of off lead access and those seeking tighter controls consistently endorsing fencing playgrounds as a proportionate solution to reduce conflict while maintaining the park's shared use character.



School students identifying that many children can be scared of dogs and need for separation

6.13 Safety as a combined behaviour and infrastructure issue

Across the feedback, safety was rarely framed as a single problem with a single solution. Instead, respondents consistently linked safety to:

- maintenance (roots, puddles, erosion, flooding)
- design and zoning (separation of uses)
- clear expectations and communication
- enforcement and management presence

This suggests that improving safety at Rosanna Parklands will require integrated management responses, rather than relying solely on infrastructure changes or rule enforcement.

6.14 Health and wellbeing benefits

Community feedback provides compelling evidence that Rosanna Parklands functions as a critical health and wellbeing asset, supporting both physical activity and mental health across the lifespan. Respondents consistently described the park as contributing to illness prevention, recovery and social connection, rather than simply recreation. Several participants explicitly linked regular use of the park to reduced reliance on health services and improved recovery outcomes:

> "This 3-4K walk keeps me out of hospital."
>
> "I used the park to recover from illness, mentally and physically."

Mental health and social wellbeing benefits were also strongly evident. Respondents highlighted the importance of the park as a space for connection, routine and belonging, particularly for people experiencing isolation:

> "The social dog atmosphere is a great way of handling social isolation issues in Banyule. I am old. Talking to young people grounds me in the community."

This aligns closely with Council's broader objectives relating to preventative health, ageing well, social inclusion and community connection, as well as State policy emphasis on open space as a protective determinant of health.

6.15 Heritage, governance and community stewardship

Feedback from the online survey introduces a strong and expanded focus on heritage protection, governance and community stewardship, positioning these as foundational considerations for any future management of Rosanna Parklands.

Several respondents explicitly referenced the park's Heritage Overlay and its nomination for inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register, identifying heritage protection as a non-negotiable principle for future planning:

> "The Rosanna Parklands is protected by a Heritage Overlay in the Banyule Planning Scheme. It is presently nominated for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register. This highlights its Heritage significance in the State of Victoria and must be a guiding principle in the development of a management plan."

These comments indicate a strong expectation that change be incremental, sensitive and consistent with the original landscape vision, rather than transformative. For this cohort, heritage was closely linked to:

- maintaining the naturalistic landscape character
- limiting built structures and over formalisation
- respecting the historic golf course layout and design intent
- prioritising restoration over redevelopment

This perspective sits alongside, rather than in opposition to, requests for improved access and amenities, reinforcing the need for careful balancing between protection and use.

6.15.1 Governance, communication and transparency

Some of the survey respondents focused on how the park is governed, communicated about and cared for over time, with multiple respondents calling for visible, transparent and place-based communication:

> "Speak directly with neighbouring residents that hold significant day to day knowledge of the park over decades."

Respondents expressed interest in understanding:

- what changes are occurring and why
- how environmental health is being monitored
- how community knowledge is being incorporated into decisions

This reflects a desire for ongoing dialogue, not one-off consultation, and signals that the community values being treated as active custodians rather than passive users.

6.15.2 Community stewardship and shared care

There was strong support for more structured community stewardship models, drawing inspiration from successful examples such as Merri Creek. Suggestions included:

> "Liaise with the Friends of Salt Creek/Rosanna Parklands..."

Respondents proposed a range of stewardship mechanisms:

- formal Friends groups
- schools adopting sections of the park (wetlands, creek, play areas)
- community led planting and habitat restoration
- rubbish removal and regeneration activities
- partnerships with Men's Sheds and community groups

This approach was framed not only as environmental protection, but also as a way to:

- build ownership and pride
- strengthen intergenerational connection
- support education and wellbeing outcomes

Several respondents proposed data driven and participatory monitoring as a way to strengthen stewardship and trust:

> "Initiate an environmental benchmarking program...water quality...notable species..."

> "Council could engage users with an iNaturalist project which could be promoted widely in local schools..."

This represents a shift from consultation about design to shared responsibility for long term care and evaluation.

6.16 Additional concerns raised

A small number of respondents raised additional issues, including concerns about parking capacity near entrances, noise impacts near residential streets, and the need for clearer way finding and historical interpretation. While these views were not widely held, they provide useful context for managing change sensitively and balancing diverse expectations.

7. Conclusion and next steps

The consultation demonstrates strong alignment between community aspirations, Council objectives and current best practice design and management of parklands. The feedback offers a clear foundation for how the Parklands should be protected, cared for and sensitively improved into the future.

Using these findings, Council will now develop a draft Rosanna Parklands Management Plan, including a vision statement, set of guiding principles and proposed actions that consider the key themes raised by the community and support ongoing management of the parklands.

The draft management plan will be shared for further community feedback to ensure the recommendations genuinely reflect local values, experiences and expectations. This next phase will provide an opportunity for community members to check, refine and confirm the direction, helping ensure the Management Plan gets it right for both current and future generations.

8. Acknowledgements

Banyule City Council warmly thanks the 741 community members who generously shared their time, ideas and lived experiences throughout this engagement process. Your insights have directly shaped our understanding of how Rosanna Parklands is valued today and how it should be cared for into the future.

We also acknowledge the significant contribution of the **Friends of Salt Creek and Associated Parklands**, whose longstanding local knowledge, stewardship and advocacy have been integral to understanding the environmental health, history and day-to-day experiences of the Parklands.

Council further extends sincere appreciation to independent engagement consultant **Marta Blumeris**, whose exceptional expertise and unwavering commitment to elevating children's voices enriched the depth and inclusiveness of the process.



Natural character of the Parklands pictured above

Appendix

9. Strategic alignment

Development of a management plan for Rosanna Parkland is supported by Banyule City Council priorities, including:

9.1 Marrageil Strategy (2024-2031)

The Marrageil Strategy provides a foundation for how Banyule Council works with Traditional Owners and First Nations people. Its vision emphasises embedding First Nations voices, values and principles into everything Council does, as a pathway to better relationships and stronger community outcomes.

For the Rosanna Parklands Management Plan, this means the Strategy directly shapes both the process and the outcomes of how the Parklands will be cared for into the future.

9.2 Banyule Public Open Space Plan (2016-2031)

The Banyule Public Open Space Plan (POSP) sets out the long-term framework for how open spaces across the municipality should be planned, developed and managed. The core aims of the POSP directly shape the purpose, scope and priorities of the Rosanna Parklands Management Plan.

9.3 Biodiversity Strategy (2025-2035)

The Biodiversity Strategy will directly guide development of the Rosanna Parklands Management Plan by setting the framework for how Council protects, restores and enhances natural environments across Banyule. Its focus on native vegetation, habitat connectivity, healthy waterways and the management of invasive species aligns closely with the ecological priorities raised through community engagement at Rosanna Parklands.

9.4 Urban Forest Strategy (2023-2033)

The Urban Forest Strategy directly shapes the Rosanna Parklands Management Plan by setting the canopy, planting and tree management priorities that will guide how the Parklands' trees, shade, cooling and vegetation are protected and expanded. It ensures future decisions support climate resilience, ecological health and improved community comfort across the Parklands.

9.5 Active Banyule Plan (2025-2030)

The Active Banyule Plan sets Council's strategic direction for increasing physical activity and active lifestyles across the municipality. Developed with reference to community health data and engagement, the Plan recognises the role of open spaces, trails and recreational facilities in supporting walking, cycling, informal sport and everyday movement.

The Plan focuses on creating safe, connected and inclusive environments that encourage people of all ages and abilities to be active. It emphasises improving access to local parks, strengthening path networks, supporting active transport, and reducing barriers to participation, particularly for children, older adults and people with disability.

9.6 Inclusive Banyule (2022-2026)

Currently being updated, The Inclusive Banyule Plan is Council's commitment to Banyule's diverse communities. It guides how we work to promote and foster diversity and inclusion locally and across our organisation. The objectives aim to ensure that public spaces are welcoming, usable and safe for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, including children, older adults, people with disability and culturally diverse communities.

9.7 Climate Resilience Objectives

Council's approach also recognises the increasing impacts of climate change on open spaces and community wellbeing. This includes planning for shade, cooling, water sensitive design, flood management and resilient landscapes that can adapt to hotter, drier conditions while continuing to support community use and environmental values.

9.8 Youth Spaces Plan (2021) and Implementation Plan (2024)

Endorsed by Council in 2021, the development of the Youth Spaces Plan included active engagement with 348 community members through surveys, workshops/events and group discussions. In 2024, a second phase of engagement was undertaken to develop the Banyule Youth Spaces Implementation Plan, which was adopted by Council in April 2024.

The Implementation Plan guides Council to provide outdoor recreation places and spaces for young people aged 12 – 25 years across Banyule. It makes sure these places and spaces are youth friendly, that they enable young people to feel included and that they are holistic, innovative and meaningful for young people across Banyule.

The youth space plans specifically nominate the southern portion of Rosanna Parklands for the location of a bike jump facility, based on recommendations from Banyule youth during the strategies development.

9.9 Public Toilet Plan (2023)

The Banyule Public Toilet Plan was adopted (with amendments) by Council in December 2023. Two rounds of engagement took place. The first in April / May 2023 and a total of 545 people completed the survey. The second engagement occurred in October 2023 and a total of 50 people completed the survey.

A detailed condition audit of all toilets across Banyule was undertaken. This audit included physical condition inspection of each toilet to assist in determining remaining useful life of toilet facilities and their renewal requirements. Community feedback was also considered to prepare the renewal program.

The timing of the replacement program has been developed utilising the condition data of existing toilets and their usage, meaning those public toilets in Banyule in the worst condition are replaced first.