



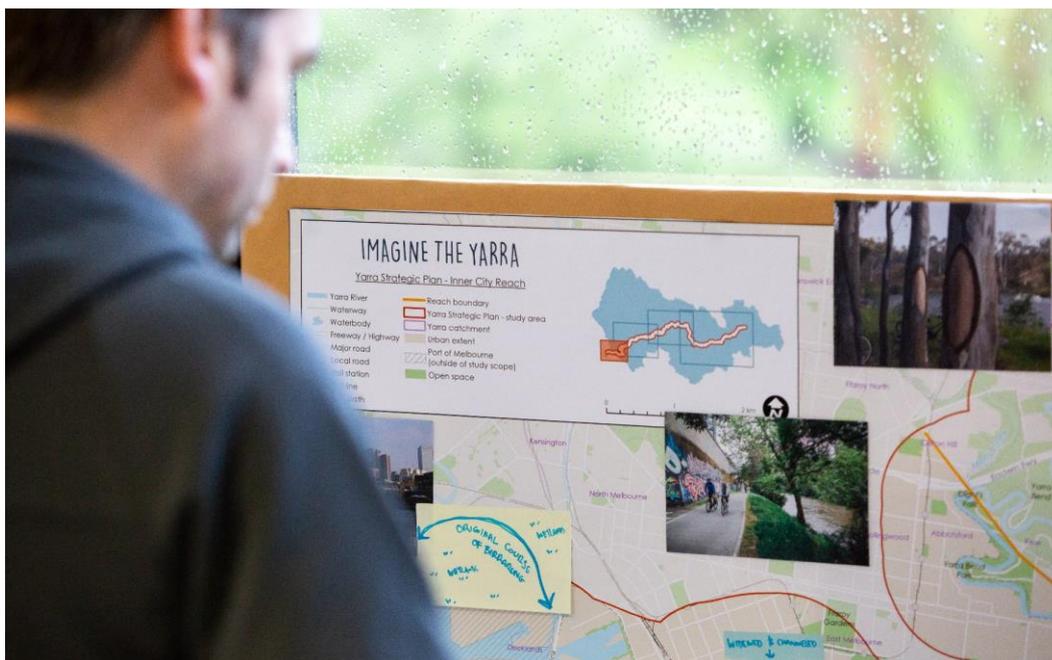
Yarra Strategic Plan community engagement Summary of Lower Rural and Suburban Workshop (Warrandyte to Dights Falls)

Between May and August 2018 Melbourne Water undertook community engagement to build the content of the draft Yarra Strategic Plan.

This engagement included a series of community workshops along the Yarra, an online survey, an interactive online map, and social media.

The information collected from the community will be used to write the draft Yarra Strategic Plan, to be released in 2019.

This report provides an overview of the responses received at the Lower Rural and Suburban Community Workshop which took place in Warrandyte on Saturday 16 June 2018, with 25 community members attending.





The purpose of the workshop was to ensure the draft Yarra Strategic Plan reflects the community's vision for the river and explore how the plan can protect the Yarra and its parklands into the future.



Workshop participants were asked to reflect on five key themes, discuss what success would look like for the Yarra Strategic Plan, and identify areas for protection. Melbourne Water will consider all feedback in the development of the Yarra Strategic Plan.

Themed discussion

Workshop participants were asked to explore the five key themes of access, parklands, culture and heritage, views and landscapes, and experiences, using maps to illustrate issues and opportunities. The following provides a summary from each of the themed discussions.



Access: Where should we expand and improve access to the Yarra River? What for?

Discussions highlighted the need to manage access to protect vegetation from damage caused by high use, with particular reference made to Warrandyte, Bend of Islands and Wonga Park.

Some participants believed there was a need for better, low-impact methods of access to be made available rather than restricting access.



Parklands: How would you like to see the river parklands and trails improved and expanded?

Participants wanted more trails and walking tracks in the suburban reach, particularly on the north side of the river.

In the lower rural reach discussion focused on the need for new parklands for recreation and habitat corridors around Coldstream, Yering, Yarra Glen and Tarrawarra.



Culture and heritage: Where are the places of heritage and cultural value? How would you like them protected?

Discussions focused on Aboriginal culture. Areas identified as having high Aboriginal cultural and heritage value included:

- the area from Tikalara Park through to Laughing Waters
- Brushy Creek
- Wonga Park
- Bolin Bolin.

Views and landscapes: Where are the important views and landscapes along the river? What makes them valuable?

Many participants highlighted the significant landscape value of the Yarra with particular reference made to the beautiful landscapes, swimming spots, native flora and fauna, and habitats.

Participants identified the need to protect views from development to ensure the 'natural feeling' of the area remains.

Experiences: How would you like to see the river parklands and trails improved and expanded?

Participants valued the experience of being immersed in nature, and the feeling that the environment is being well cared for.

An opportunity for cultural learning experiences was also identified, particularly around Aboriginal culture and sites of Aboriginal heritage.

Participants also discussed improving the quality of the water, allowing for swimming and drinking.



What success looks like...

Participants were asked to describe what the success of the Yarra Strategic Plan would look like in five, ten and fifty years.

The following highlights some of the participants' aspirations.

... in 5 years

- There is a commitment from different levels of government to improve environmental health.
- Installation of signage and revegetation has commenced.
- There are stronger controls on chemical use.
- There is strong community support for the protection of the Yarra.

... in 10 years

- The river is effectively managed.
- There is a greater understanding and awareness of environmental protection.
- There are greater protections for sites of cultural significance.
- Progress has been made against a variety of targets such as water quality, and reduction of feral animals and exotic plants.

... in 50 years

- The plan has been fully implemented.
- One body manages the whole river.
- There is a high level of biodiversity along the river and degraded areas have been significantly improved.
- Wurundjeri management and partnership are best practice.
- The water is drinkable.



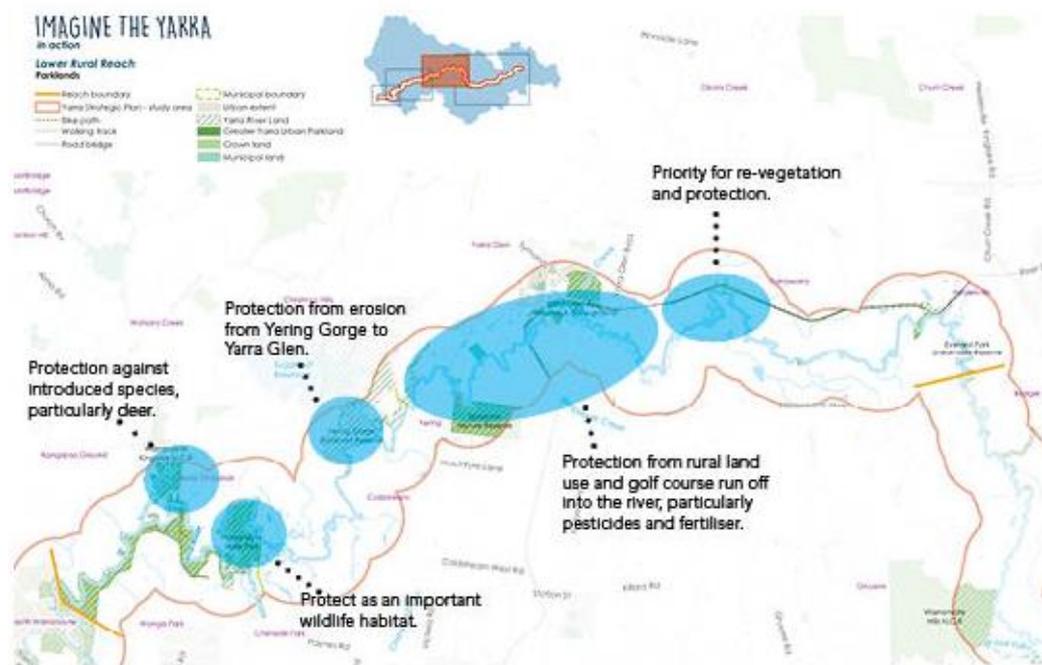
Priority areas for protection

Participants were asked to identify areas along the river to be considered for protection. The following outlines these areas as well as participants' motivations for protecting particular areas.

Lower rural reach

The key reasons people cited for identifying areas for protection in the lower rural reach were:

- To have informed advice about how the environment is protected.
- Consistency in protection across responsible authorities.
- Protection from domestic animals in high biodiversity areas.

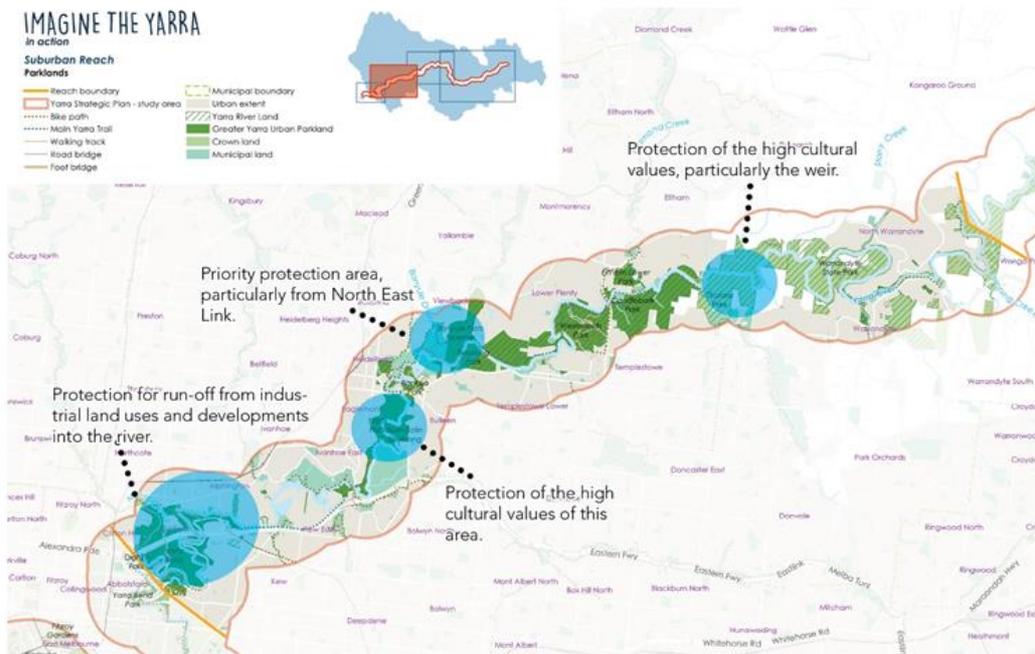




Suburban reach

The key reasons people cited for identifying areas for protection in the suburban reach were:

- To protect the river from erosion impacts caused by development.
- To have consistency in protection across responsible authorities.
- To protect against non-native flora and fauna.



Next steps

The feedback collected during this phase of engagement will be used to write the draft Yarra Strategic Plan, which will be released for comment in 2019.