

# Yellingbo Conservation Area Plan Engage Victoria Report



© The State of Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 2018



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence. You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the State of Victoria as author. The licence does not apply to any images, photographs or branding, including the Victorian Coat of Arms, the Victorian Government logo and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) logo. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

#### **Disclaimer**

This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

#### **Accessibility**

If you would like to receive this publication in an alternative format, please telephone the DELWP Customer Service Centre on 136186, email [customer.service@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:customer.service@delwp.vic.gov.au) or via the National Relay Service on 133 677 [www.relayservice.com.au](http://www.relayservice.com.au).

# Contents

<b>Acronyms .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Yellingbo Conservation Area Plan Consultation .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Survey.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Results of Community Engagement .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Data Quality.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Analysis of data .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Which of these statements describes your connection to the Conservation Area?.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Q1 -Values. What are the three most important things the Conservation Area should focus on? .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Q2 -Issues. What are the three biggest issues that establishment of the Conservation Area should focus on?.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Written data from submissions .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Question comments .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Further comments on the survey.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Written submissions.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Next steps.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Appendix 1: Survey questions .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Appendix 2: Results presented by area.....</b>	<b>13</b>

## Acronyms

DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
NCR	Nature Conservation Reserve
VEAC	Victorian Environmental Assessment Council
YCA	Yellingbo Conservation Area
YCACC	Yellingbo Conservation Area Coordinating Committee

## Introduction

The Yellingbo Conservation Area (YCA) Plan is being prepared in close consultation with the local and wider community. The Plan will guide implementation of the *Victorian Government Response to Victorian Environmental Assessment Council's Yellingbo Investigation Final Report, March 2014* and provide overall direction on how the Conservation Area will be managed in the future.

The successful management and implementation of the Conservation Area is dependent on the support and local knowledge of the community and this can only be gathered by directly engaging with the local communities. As well as the local community, the broader community is important and has the ability to input into this process. The successful ongoing management of the Conservation Area can only be achieved by including all community in the preparation of plans to guide the management of the area.

As part of this engagement process, a survey was developed by the Yellingbo Conservation Area Coordinating Committee (YCACC) and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) staff to help develop the Plan by identifying values and issues within the investigation area. The survey was made available to stakeholders via the Engage Victoria website.

## Yellingbo Conservation Area Plan Consultation

The Engage Victoria survey is one part of a detailed community consultation process that has included targeted meetings with interested groups and stakeholders, consultation with key agencies groups and public consultation through the Engage Victoria Website.

Consultation and communication to date has included:

- Workshops with a range of different agencies;
- Workshops with interested community groups including groups associated with recreation and tourism, agriculture and industry, conservation and township associations;
- Email and newsletter notifications to interested stakeholders;
- Advertising in local newspapers of the project area promoting the opportunities to provide input;
- Social media posts notifying of the Engage Victoria process; and
- Engage Victoria survey questions.

Information collected above will help inform the draft Plan. This report shows outputs from the Engage Victoria process only. A separate report on outputs from the targeted workshops and meetings has been prepared.

## Survey

The survey was available on the Engage Victoria website from Friday 17 November 2017 until Monday 18 December 2017. A copy of the survey is presented in Appendix 1.

The survey asked three questions aimed at identifying values and issues, with tick box questions.

- Which of these statements describes your connection to the Conservation Area? (Tick all that apply)
- What are the three most important things that establishment of the Conservation Area should do? (Tick 3 only)

- What are the three biggest issues that establishment of the Conservation Area should focus on? (Tick 3 only).

The opportunity to comment was provided with each question, as well as the ability to add further comment the end of the survey.

There was a total of 994 submissions to the survey. Of these, 936 were submitted via the Engage Victoria website, 58 were submitted either by mail to the DELWP office at Knoxfield, or to the [enviroplan.portphillip@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:enviroplan.portphillip@delwp.vic.gov.au) email address. There were also 4 written submissions received from organisation and individuals.

Survey results and a summary of written submissions are presented.

## Results of Community Engagement

There were some consistent themes in the data that was collected. Feedback received showed that the main things that the establishment of the Conservation Area should do are:

- Ensure there is no increase in bushfire risk to the community;
- Encourage community access and recreation;
- Provide habitat for threatened species;
- Contribute to tourism opportunities in the region; and
- Support local industry and adjoining land uses.

The biggest issues that the establishment of the Conservation Area should focus on as seen by respondents were:

- Controlling weed species;
- Controlling pest animal species; and
- Managing bushfire risk.

## Data Quality

The Engage Victoria survey output revealed a large number of submissions that came from the same IP address. The Engage Victoria platform records the IP address for each submission, which is a unique, numeric identifier assigned to an individual device. Engage Victoria doesn't assign an IP address to a submission, but rather recognises the IP address that a device carries. There were three IP addresses that each recorded a high number of responses.

When these responses from the same IP address were submitted, a unique first and last name were provided. However, there was no further contact information so this data has not been able to be verified. As we cannot verify this data, it has been included in the analysis, but has been separated out and two data sets will be presented – one with all the data and one with the data adjusted to remove the same IP addresses.

The purpose of the survey was to help identify local and broader community values and management issues within the investigation area. From this data, values and issues can still be identified and analysed. Therefore, while the multiple responses from the same IP address reveal a potential data quality issue, meaningful information can still be gained from the survey.

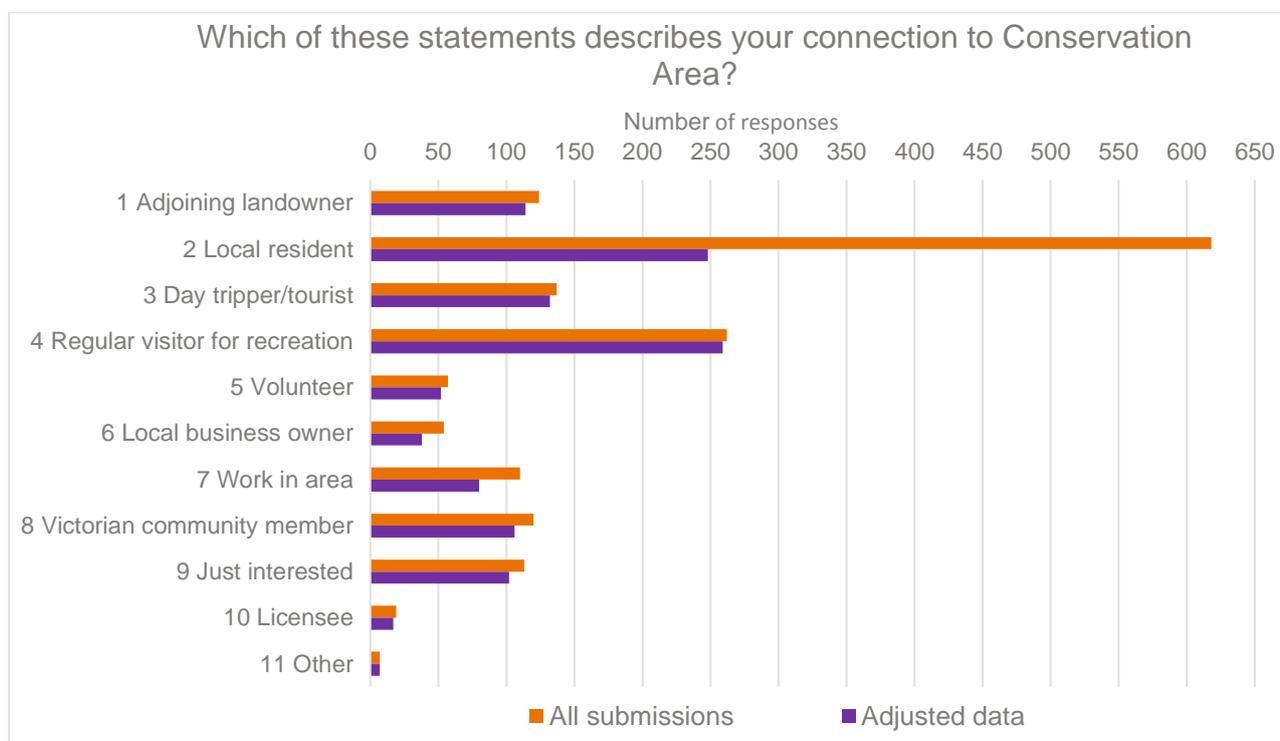
In future, additional required data fields will be applied to the online survey to provide result verification through Engage Victoria.

## Analysis of data

The results have been analysed by total quantity of response to each value identified in a question. The results are presented in table format depicting results for both the entire data (including the data which came from the repeated IP addresses), as well as adjusted data without the repeated IP addresses.

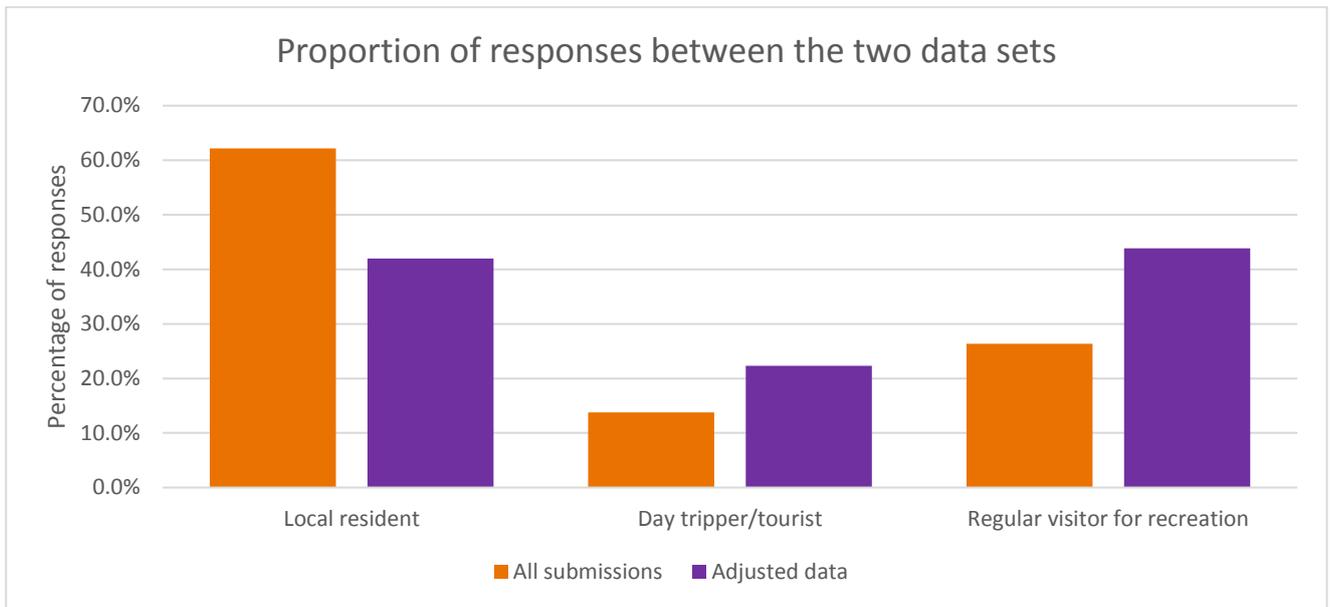
### Which of these statements describes your connection to the Conservation Area?

This initial question sought to gain an understanding of how respondents are engaged with the Conservation Area and how this reflects values in the results. Respondents to the survey were most commonly either local residents, regular visitors for recreation, or day tripper/tourist.



Graph 1: Respondents indicated their connection to the Conservation Area by ticking relevant descriptions.

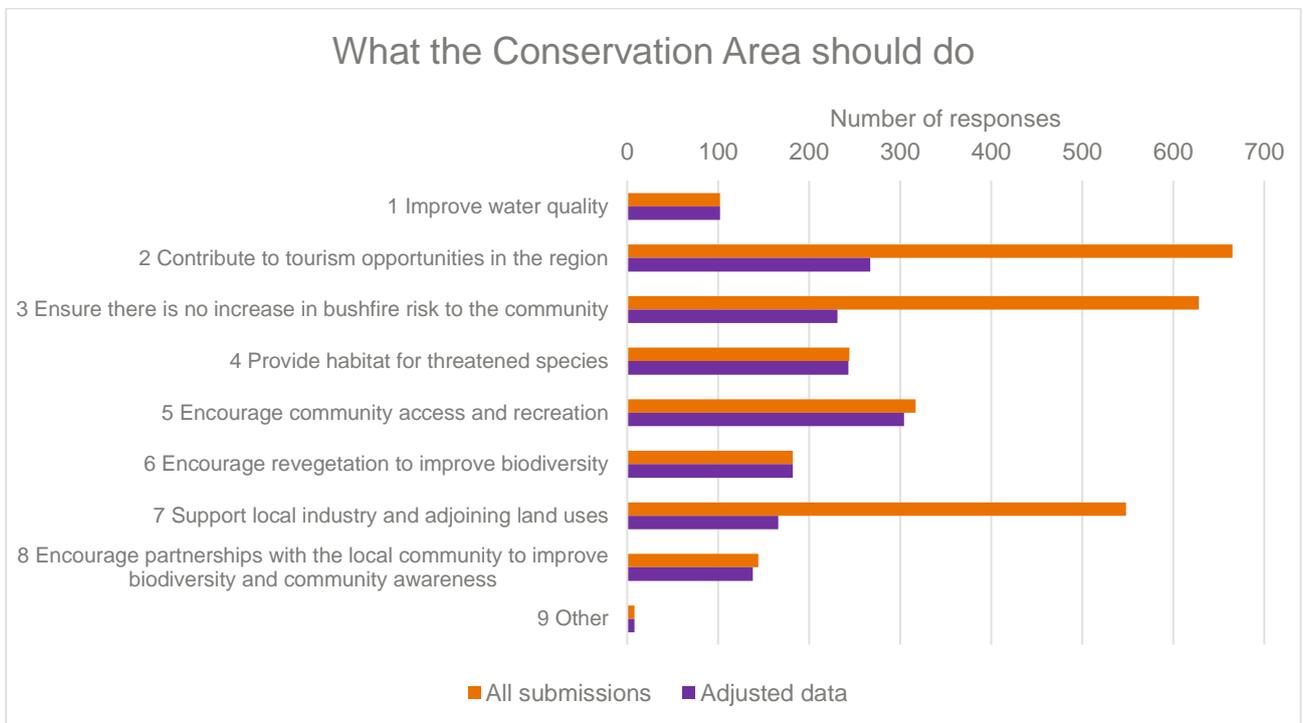
However, there were still differences between all submissions and the data that came from the same IP addresses. While the key categories were the same (Graph 2), the proportion of most common respondent to the survey changed from 'Local Resident' to 'Regular visitor for Recreation'. It is important to note that in both cases, local residents are still highly represented in the responses.



Graph 2. The three most common respondent profiles are displayed as a percentage of total responses for both data-sets.

### Q1 -Values. What are the three most important things the Conservation Area should focus on?

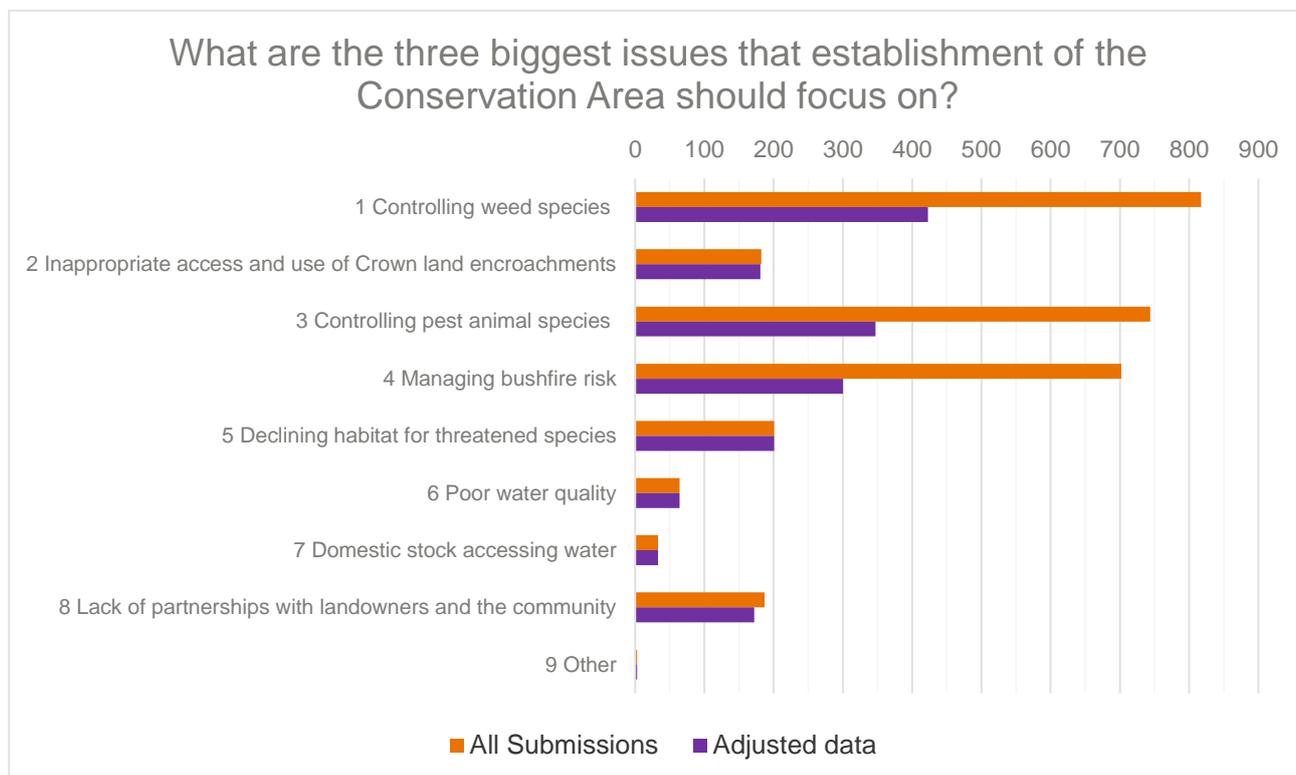
Responses to Conservation Area values are displayed in Graph 3.



Graph 3. Respondents indicated the management aims they consider most important.

## Q2 -Issues. What are the three biggest issues that establishment of the Conservation Area should focus on?

The three biggest issues identified were controlling weed species, controlling pest-animal species and managing bushfire risk. These results were the same for both data-sets, including the proportion of votes for each category.



Graph 4. Respondents indicated the biggest issues the Conservation Area should address.

Further data analysis has been provided in Appendix 3 based on grouped area, to determine values and issues within geographic areas of the YCA.

## Written data from submissions

### Question comments

In some cases, comments were made after each question. These comments generally emphasised or provided further detail to themes already raised in the tick boxes. This was the case for all three questions.

### Further comments on the survey

The survey provided the opportunity for respondents to make additional comments. There were over 450 written comments received as part of the survey responses. The largest proportion of comments were regarding mountain bike riding in the Warramate Hills NCR followed by the redevelopment plans for Haining Farm. Bushfire risk and management concerns were also popular topics. Although the survey revealed weeds and pest animals as a high priority, very few comments focused upon the issue.

The additional comments have been grouped into general categories and the themes within these categories are summarised below.

- Bushfire risk
  - Most comments raised concern about increased vegetation leading to increased bushfire risk
  - Some comments stating riparian zones inhibit fire behaviour
  - Fire risk in the Yellingbo NCR
  - Discussion of the events of Black Saturday
- Environmental
  - Ensuring survival of threatened species
  - Environmental impact of mountain bike riding in the Warramate Hills NCR
  - Controlling stock access to waterways
  - Highlighted the primary purpose of the VEAC recommendations (nature conservation)
  - Tourism opportunities provided by environmental health
  - Threats to environmental health
  - Width of riparian corridors
- Haining Farm
  - Local objection to the final Haining Farm redevelopment concept plan
  - Concern of increased fire risk due to revegetation
  - Suggestions to continue the previous use of Haining Farm
- Local community
  - Concern around local representation in the consultation process
  - Appeal to listen to the local community
- Management of public land
  - Doubt in the ability of government agencies to take on more management area or to manage weeds
  - Varying advice to DELWP on management of the Conservation Area
  - Concern on adequate funding for ongoing management
  - Questions around how management decisions are determined
- Recreation
  - Most comments expressed support for cross country mountain bike riding in the Warramate Hills NCR and were of the following themes
    - Low environmental impact
    - Social, health and local economic benefits
    - Security provided by presence of park users
    - Historical use of the area
    - Complaint around inaccurate representation of the mountain bike riding in the Warramate Hills NCR.
  - Opposition to mountain bike riding in the Warramate Hills NCR
    - Environmental impact of mountain bike riding

- Illegal trails
  - Local opposition to formalising trails
- Maintaining fishing access
- Encourage tourism
- Community access to the Conservation Area
- Survey process
  - Concern around the questions asked
  - Concern about the perceived lack of information
- Weeds and pest animals
  - Need to ensure that there is cooperative management between government agencies and adjoining landholders
  - Increasing impact of weeds
  - Impact of deer

## Written submissions

Written submissions were also received and include submissions from a few organisations and individuals.

Table of summary of submissions.

Written submitters	Summary of submission
Yarra Ranges Mountain Bikers	Summarised the use of the Warramate Hills Nature Conservation Reserve by mountain bike riders, and provided a response to the potential threats of mountain bike riding in the reserve.
Friends of Sassafras Creek	Highlighting the threat of weeds and pest animals to the natural values in Sassafras Creek NCR and the need for funding on weed control programs. Particular focus on the need for weed control on properties adjacent to the reserve.
Individual submission	Provided a response to the Haining Farm Proposal 2016. Comments that the successful implementation of the Conservation Area needs to integrate with local Stream Flow Management Plans. Raises six suggestions of varying content around Haining Farm and ask a few related questions.
Individual submission	Provides thoughts on implementation of the YCA.

## Next steps

Results from the engagement process and this information will be used to help develop the Conservation Area Plan. A draft version of the Plan will be made available to the public following completion in 2018. Once the draft plan is available, additional consultation will be undertaken to help refine the draft Plan. Additional consultation proposed includes:

- Open drop in sessions or pop up sessions for the wider community;
- Newspaper advertisements detailing opportunities to be involved;
- Organic social media posts detailing opportunities to comment on the plan and attend community sessions;
- Paid social media advertising detailing further opportunities to comment on the plan and attend community sessions;
- Posters and flyers in shire offices and stores around YCA promoting the release of the draft plan and community drop in sessions;
- Mail outs and e-newsletters;
- Contacting people who have previously participated in surveys; and
- Direct mailout to adjacent landholders.

# Appendix 1: Survey questions

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to be included on the Yellingbo Conservation Area Coordinating Committee's mailing list to be kept informed of progress? Yes/No

Which of these statements describes your connection to the Conservation Area? **(TICK all that apply):**

- |                                |                            |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Adjoining landowner            | Work in area               |
| Local resident                 | Victorian community member |
| Day tripper/tourist            | Just interested            |
| Regular visitor for recreation | Licensee                   |
| Volunteer                      | Other                      |
| Local business owner           | _____                      |

**Q1. What are the 3 most important things that establishment of the Conservation Area should do? (TICK 3 only)**

- 1 Improve water quality.
- 2 Contribute to tourism opportunities in the region.
- 3 Ensure there is no increase in bushfire risk to the community.
- 4 Provide habitat for threatened species.
- 5 Encourage community access and recreation.
- 6 Encourage revegetation to improve biodiversity.
- 7 Support local industry and adjoining land uses.
- 8 Encourage partnerships with the local community to improve biodiversity and community awareness
- 9 Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Q2. What are the 3 biggest issues that establishment of the Conservation Area should focus on? (TICK 3 only)**

- 1 Controlling weed species (Blackberry, Wandering Tradescantia, Willow etc).
- 2 Inappropriate access and use of Crown land (4WD access, motor bike riding, rubbish dumping, encroachments, camping etc).
- 3 Controlling pest animal species (deer, rabbits, foxes etc).
- 4 Managing bushfire risk.

- 5 Declining habitat for threatened species.
- 6 Poor water quality.
- 7 Domestic stock accessing waterways.
- 8 Lack of partnerships with landowners and the community
- 9 Other:

---

**Q3. Any further comments?**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Please email your completed survey to: [enviroplan.portphillip@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:enviroplan.portphillip@delwp.vic.gov.au)

Or send by post to:

Yellingbo Conservation Area  
DELWP  
Private Bag 15  
Ferntree Gully Delivery Centre  
Victoria 3156

## Appendix 2: Results presented by area

Further data analysis based on postcode was considered, to determine values and issues within geographic areas of the YCA. It was found the same postcode could spread between multiple townships and wouldn't necessarily provide good data on local values and issues. Analyses has therefore been based on township rather than postcode.

Townships have been grouped for data analysis. Only the results from Q1 and Q2 are presented, as only respondents from within the YCA are included.

The numbering on the response categories refers to the survey question:

*Q1. What are the 3 most important things that establishment of the Conservation Area should do?*

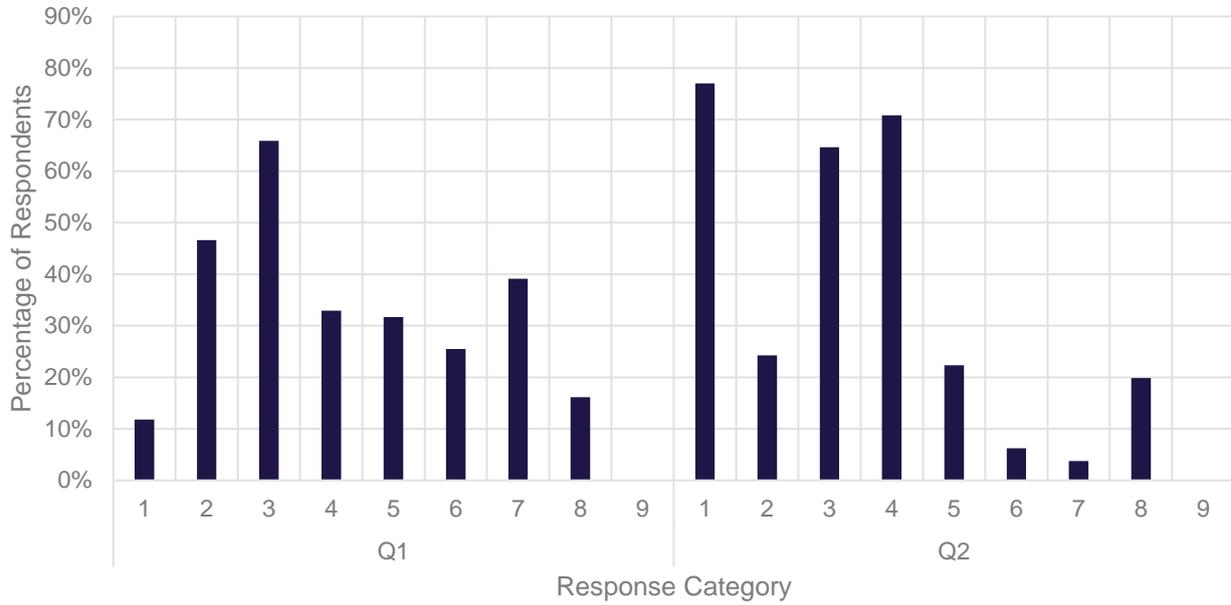
- 1 Improve water quality .*
- 2 Contribute to tourism opportunities in the region.*
- 3 Ensure there is no increase in bushfire risk to the community.*
- 4 Provide habitat for threatened species.*
- 5 Encourage community access and recreation.*
- 6 Encourage revegetation to improve biodiversity.*
- 7 Support local industry and adjoining land uses.*
- 8 Encourage partnerships with the local community to improve biodiversity and community awareness*
- 9 Other:*

*Q2. What are the 3 biggest issues that establishment of the Conservation Area should focus on?*

- 1 Controlling weed species (Blackberry, Wandering Tradescantia, Willow etc).*
- 2 Inappropriate access and use of Crown land (4WD access, motor bike riding, rubbish dumping, encroachments, camping etc).*
- 3 Controlling pest animal species (deer, rabbits, foxes etc).*
- 4 Managing bushfire risk.*
- 5 Declining habitat for threatened species.*
- 6 Poor water quality.*
- 7 Domestic stock accessing waterways.*
- 8 Lack of partnerships with landowners and the community*
- 9 Other:*

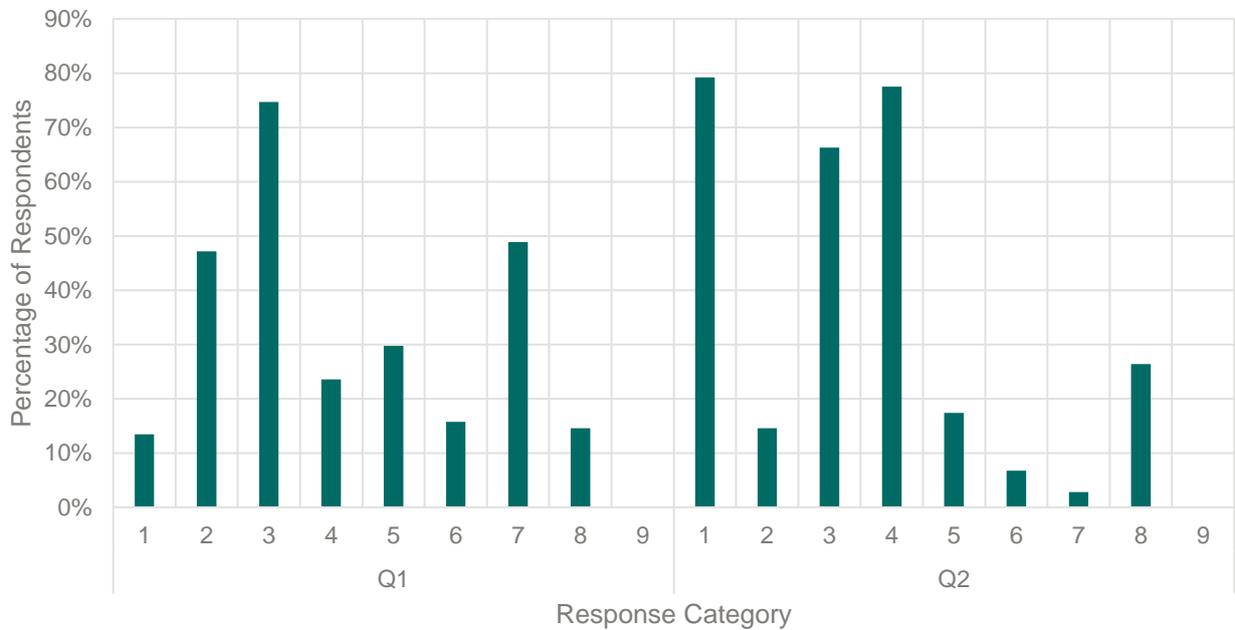
## Response of Area 1

Yarra River Woori Yallock to Healesville, Warramate NCR, Coranderk NCR, Badger Creek (Coranderk Creek), and junction of Woori Yallock Creek and Yarra River



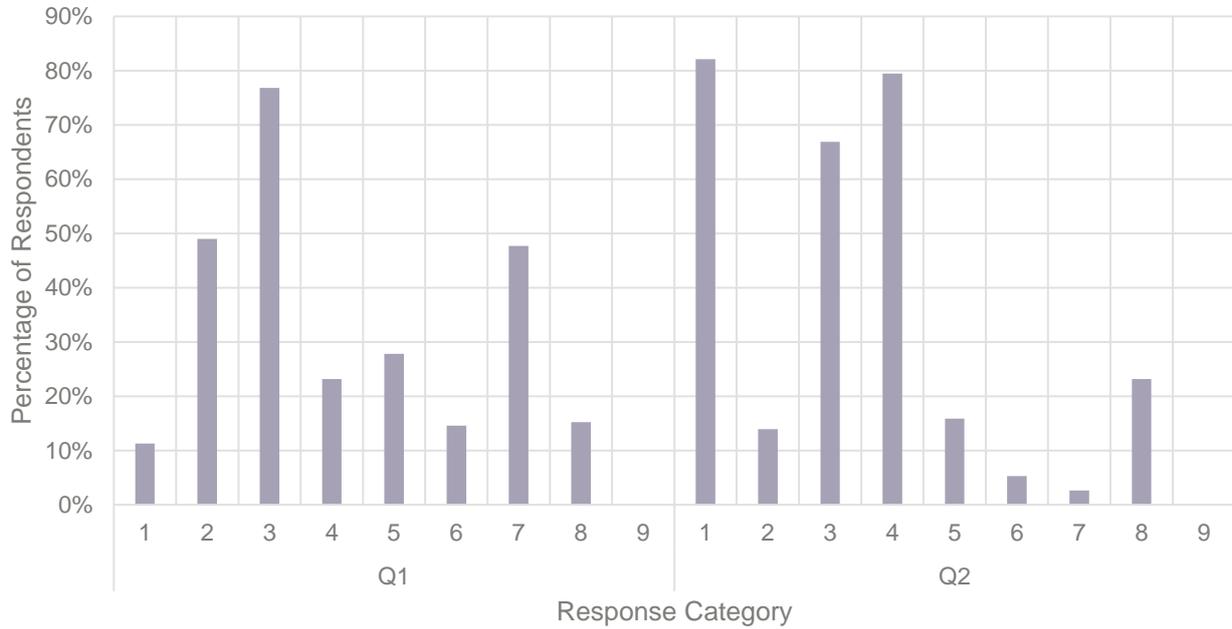
## Response of Area 2

Yarra River Millgrove to Woori Yallock, Little Yarra River, Britannia Creek and Lower Hoddles Creek



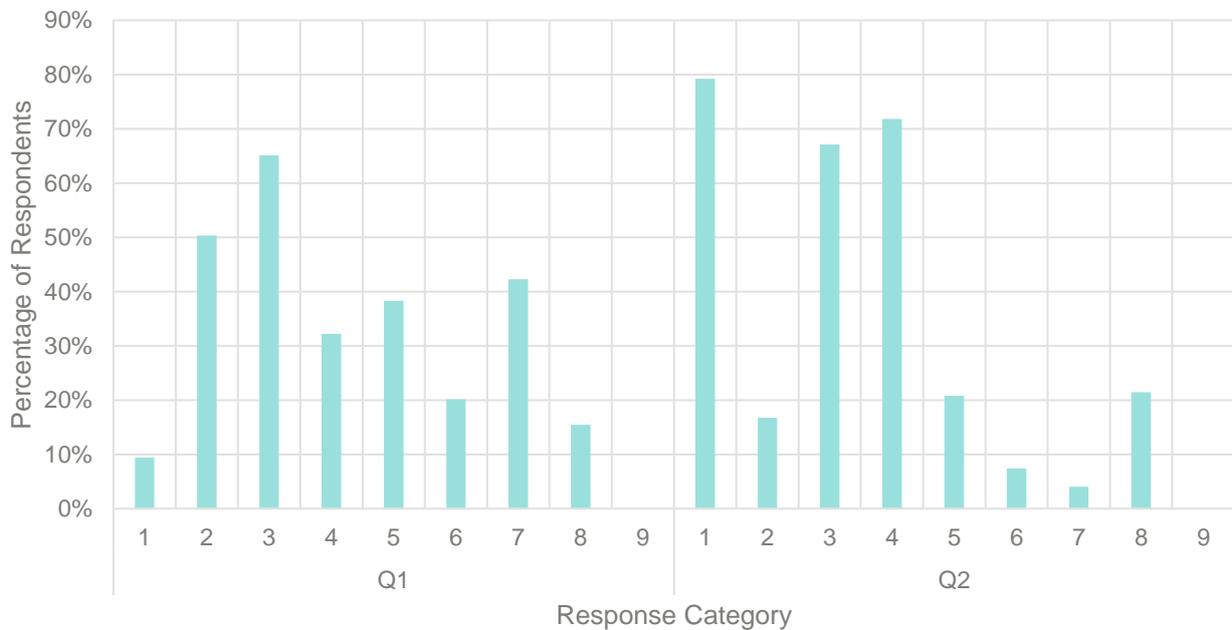
## Response of Area 3

Hoddles Creek, Hoddles Education Area, Beenak Bushland Reserve and Wet Lead Creek



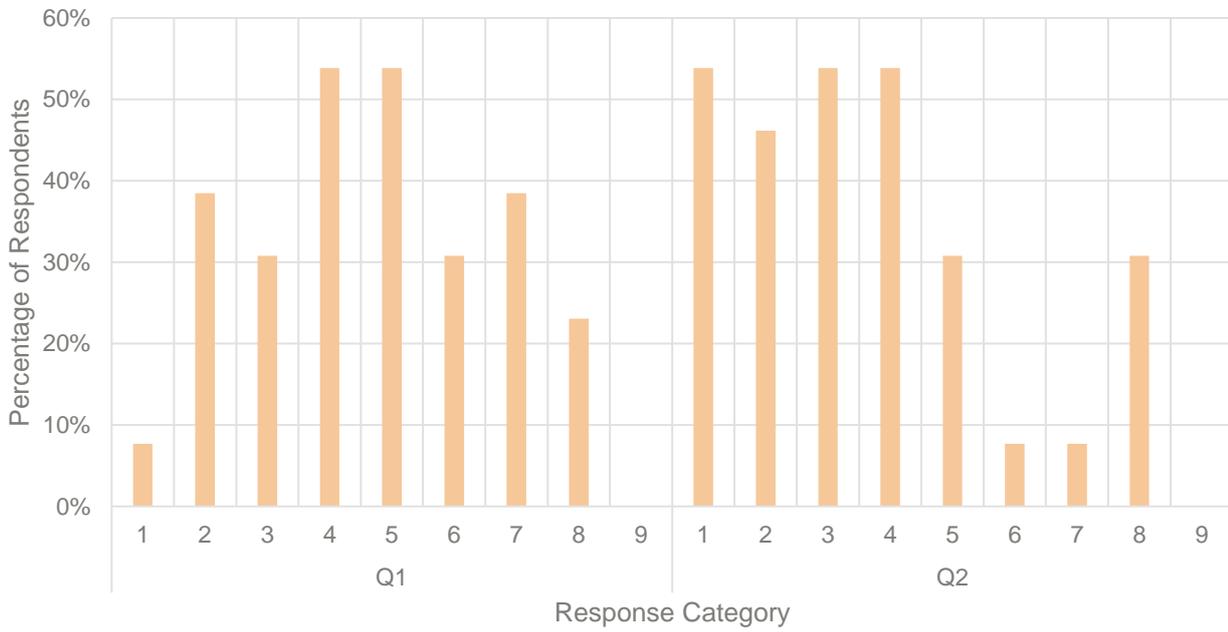
## Response of Area 4

Yellingbo NCR, Woori Yallock Creek, Sheepstation Creek, McCrae Creek, and Cockatoo Creek



## Response of Area 5

Wright Forest Bushland Reserve and Cockatoo Creek in Cockatoo Township



## Response of Area 6

Sassafrass Creek NCR, Perrins Creek, Emerald Creek, and Menzies Creek

