

Cessnock City Council  
**ENVIRONMENTAL  
ZONING FRAMEWORK**



*Image: Mount Yengo, located in Yengo National Park, is of great significance to local Aboriginal people.*

## ***Acknowledgement of Country***

Cessnock City Council acknowledges that within its local government area boundaries are the Traditional Lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people. We acknowledge these Aboriginal peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices and operations are located, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now live within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

**WARNING:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are warned that this document may contain images of people who have died.

### **Disclaimer**

While every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that this document is correct at the time of printing, Cessnock City Council, its agents and employees, disclaim any and all liability to any person in respect of anything or the consequences of anything done or omitted to be done in reliance upon the whole or any part of this document.

### **Document History**

Revision	Date Approved	Description of Changes
1		Draft for Exhibition
2		Final for Adoption

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

The Environmental Lands Study (the Study) is being undertaken by Cessnock City Council (Council) to identify lands of high environmental value in consultation with the local community and develop an environmental zoning framework for the future. The Environmental Lands Study is being undertaken in 2 Phases. The Environmental Zoning Framework Report documents Phase 1 of the Environmental Lands Study.

This Study reviews all lands contained within the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA), including lands that were previously deferred matter areas under the Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011. As part of the Study, Council has undertaken a comprehensive review and consultation process to identify and develop recommendations for the environmental zoning framework.

The objectives for the Study are to:

- identify and document the environmental values of land within the Cessnock Local Government Area;
- ensure that environmental zones are appropriately applied, reflecting the true environmental value and importance of the environmental attribute;
- ensure adequate protection of environmentally significant lands and areas of high biodiversity;
- ensure that Council is applying NSW legislation as intended;
- recommend environmental zone objectives, land uses and lot sizes for inclusion in the Cessnock Local Environment Plan; and
- Develop environmental zone principles and criteria to guide the future application of environmental zones.

The primary method for councils to manage land use planning and minimize land use conflicts is through land zoning. Ultimately, this study aims to provide clarity for the community and landholders. By identifying environmental lands accurately, any potential processes or reports that may be required will be highlighted before people plan for development and not after the process has begun. Accurately zoning lands of high environmental value will also mean that land uses permitted in these areas will reflect the importance of the environmental values.

The Northern Councils E Zone Review Final Recommendations Report and the Planning Practice Note 09-002 Environmental Protection Zones are guiding the Study. These two NSW Government documents provide direction to Councils on how to apply environmental zones.

## 1.2 Background

Council was operating under the Cessnock Local Environment Plan 1989 from 1989 until 2016. In 2006, the NSW Government brought in the *Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006* (Standard Instrument), which sets out 35 standard zones for councils to use when preparing new principal local environmental plans (LEPs) for their local government areas. Councils can select zones as appropriate to the needs of their local areas, taking into account any relevant State or regional planning guidance. Councils are not able to add new zones, create subzones or change the name of a standard zone. For each zone, the Standard Instrument sets out compulsory objectives for development, and certain mandated permitted or prohibited land uses.

Following the introduction of the Standard Instrument, councils across NSW began reviewing and updating their Local Environmental Plans (LEP) to comply with the Standard Instrument.

During the development of the 2011 LEP, Council considered zoning some lands within the LGA to an E3 Environmental Management Zone. The proposed areas included parts of the Wollombi Valley and Mulbring and came from recommendations within the City Wide Settlement Strategy 2010 (CWSS 2010).

The data that the proposed zones were based upon did not consider a range of environmental values including biodiversity values. The community and stakeholder engagement was also inadequate and resulted in poor project outcomes.

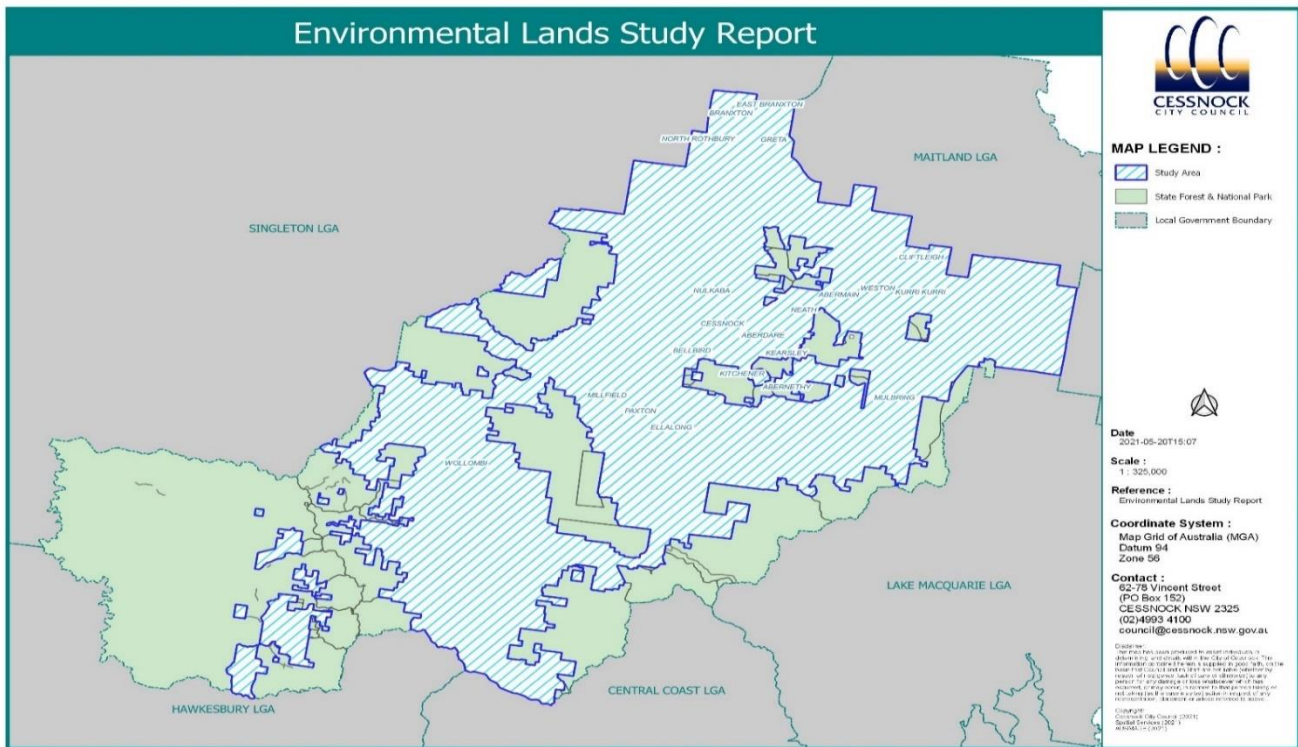
The flawed information and inadequate community engagement led to significant changes being made to the original proposal following exhibition of the draft LEP. Accordingly, in making the Cessnock LEP 2011 the Department of Planning designated these areas as 'Deferred Matter'. Meaning that the deferred land parcels remained under the 1989 LEP while the rest of the LGA came under the 2011 LEP.

At that time, Council did not have the resources available to undertake a comprehensive review of the environmental Lands or environmental zones. Council eventually opted to revert the deferred areas to an equivalent zone from the 1989 LEP until the Cessnock Local Strategic Planning Statement 2036 (formerly CWSS 2010) was completed and this Study could be undertaken. Council has gained significant learnings from this process and has incorporated these learnings into the Study.

## 2. The Study Area

This is the first LGA wide review of the environmental lands and environmental zoning framework that Council has undertaken. The Study is reviewing all lands within the LGA, excluding existing National Parks, Nature Reserves and State Forests (refer to **Figure 1**). This is because Council has a limited role in applying the statutory provisions for these lands or their management. The Cessnock LGA covers an area of approximately 196,490 hectares. The Study covers an area of approximately 117,064 hectares of land within the Cessnock LGA.

**Figure 1: The Study Area**



## 3. Spatial Data

Cessnock is collaborating with the NSW Government's Biodiversity Conservation Division (BCD) to develop key spatial layers that will provide highly accurate data. This comprehensive data will be used for the Study and for future land use planning.

Following provision of key spatial layers from BCD, Council staff will develop zoning maps based on the criteria and principles. The development of zoning maps will occur during Phase 2 of the Study.

## 4. Lands of High Environmental Value

Our region is known for its' environmental value and scenic beauty. Our natural environment is an integral part of what makes Cessnock special and unique. It is important to protect our natural environment for the benefit of the community now and into the future. Cessnock is characterised by large areas of steep, heavily vegetated terrain in the south and east, as well as flat, partially cleared areas surrounding the town of Cessnock and neighbouring urban areas. The flat terrain around Cessnock Township contains some of the largest remaining remnants of valley-floor vegetation in the Hunter Valley.

National parks and state forests cover approximately 40% of the Cessnock LGA. The national parks include Werakata, Yengo, Sugarloaf and the Watagans. Yengo national park forms part of the listing for the UNESCO Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. The listing was made in recognition of the extraordinary natural values that the area contains, including unique plants and animals and associated vegetation communities.

Cessnock is home to nine (9) threatened ecological communities, forty-six (46) threatened animal species and then (10) threatened plant species listed under the NSW *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act). Two of the threatened ecological communities are endemic to Cessnock, which means they do not occur anywhere else.

At the National level, there are four (4) threatened ecological communities, twenty six (26) threatened animal species and thirty one (31) threatened plant species listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) occurring in Cessnock. One of the threatened plant species only occurs within the Cessnock LGA.

The environmental values of lands within the Cessnock LGA will be detailed further during Phase 2 of the Study.

## 5. Planning & Legislative Context

Council has undertaken a detailed review of all relevant planning and legislative instruments that are relevant to the Study. A summary of the key planning documents related to the Study is provided below.

### 5.1 Northern Councils E Zone Review

The NSW Government (former Department of Planning & Environment) reviewed the application of Environmental zones in Local Environmental Plans for the North Coast Councils of NSW. The review applied to the LGAs of Ballina, Byron, Kyogle, Lismore and Tweed. The NSW Department of Planning and Environment released the Northern Councils E Zone Review Final Recommendations Report (Northern Councils Report) in October 2015 following extensive community and stakeholder engagement.

The Northern Councils Report outlined a series of principles and criteria to guide the application of environmental zones for these five northern councils.

Environmental zones are intended to be applied to land that is of important environmental value. The Northern Councils Report establishes two key principles for the zoning of environmental land, that an environmental zone will be applied to the land if:

- The primary use of the land is for environmental purposes. The primary use of the land is defined as the main use for which the land has been used for the last two years; and
- Land meets one or more of the environmental criteria.

A Section 117 Ministerial direction was issued to ensure that application of environmental zones in these LGAs, and to areas deferred from their Local Environmental Plans, is consistent with the final recommendations of the Northern Councils Report. All NSW councils, when reviewing the application of environmental zones, should consider the Northern Councils Report.

## 5.2 Planning Practice Note 09-002 Environmental Protection Zones

The NSW Government (former Department of Planning) released the *Planning Practice Note 09-002 Environmental Protection Zones* (Planning Practice Note) in 2009. The purpose of the Planning Practice Note is to provide guidance to Council on the environment protection zones in the Standard Instrument and how they should be applied during the preparation of local environmental plans. The Planning Practice Note includes recommended zone objectives and permissible uses for the Environmental Zones. The Planning Practice Note requires environmental zones be applied where protection of the environmental significance of the land is the primary consideration.

The Planning Practice Note outlines that where “*the primary focus is not the conservation and/or management of environmental values, a different zone type should be applied*”. It also outlines that Environmental zones should be supported by detailed Development Control Plan (DCP) provisions, matters for consideration in relation to land acquisition provisions, and the use of “*local environmental provisions may be applied where zone provisions need to be augmented in order to ensure that special environmental features are considered*”. This may include a local clause and an associated overlay map.

## 5.3 Cessnock Local Strategic Planning Statement 2036

The LSPS sets a vision and priorities for land-use planning across the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA) for the next 20 years and is a requirement of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. The LSPS is a high-level strategic document that sets the future planning direction for the LGA. The LSPS is consistent with and implements relevant actions from the Hunter Regional Plan 2036 and the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036 as well as Council’s own priorities as set out in the Cessnock Community Strategic Plan 2027 (CSP) and other adopted plans and strategies.

The LSPS identifies Planning Priorities and Principles relating to the natural environment. The requirement for Council to undertake an Environmental Lands Study is an ‘immediate’ action of the LSPS. The LSPS and the Study outline how Council will manage environmental lands in the future and will directly influence amendments to the Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 (the LEP) and the Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010 (the DCP).

## 5.4 Community Strategic Plan 2027

The Cessnock community identified a 'sustainable and healthy environment: promoting a sustainable balance between development and preserving our natural environment' as one of the five important themes of the CSP that they would like to see happen by 2027. Implementing the final recommendations from the Study will make significant progress towards achieving this community goal.

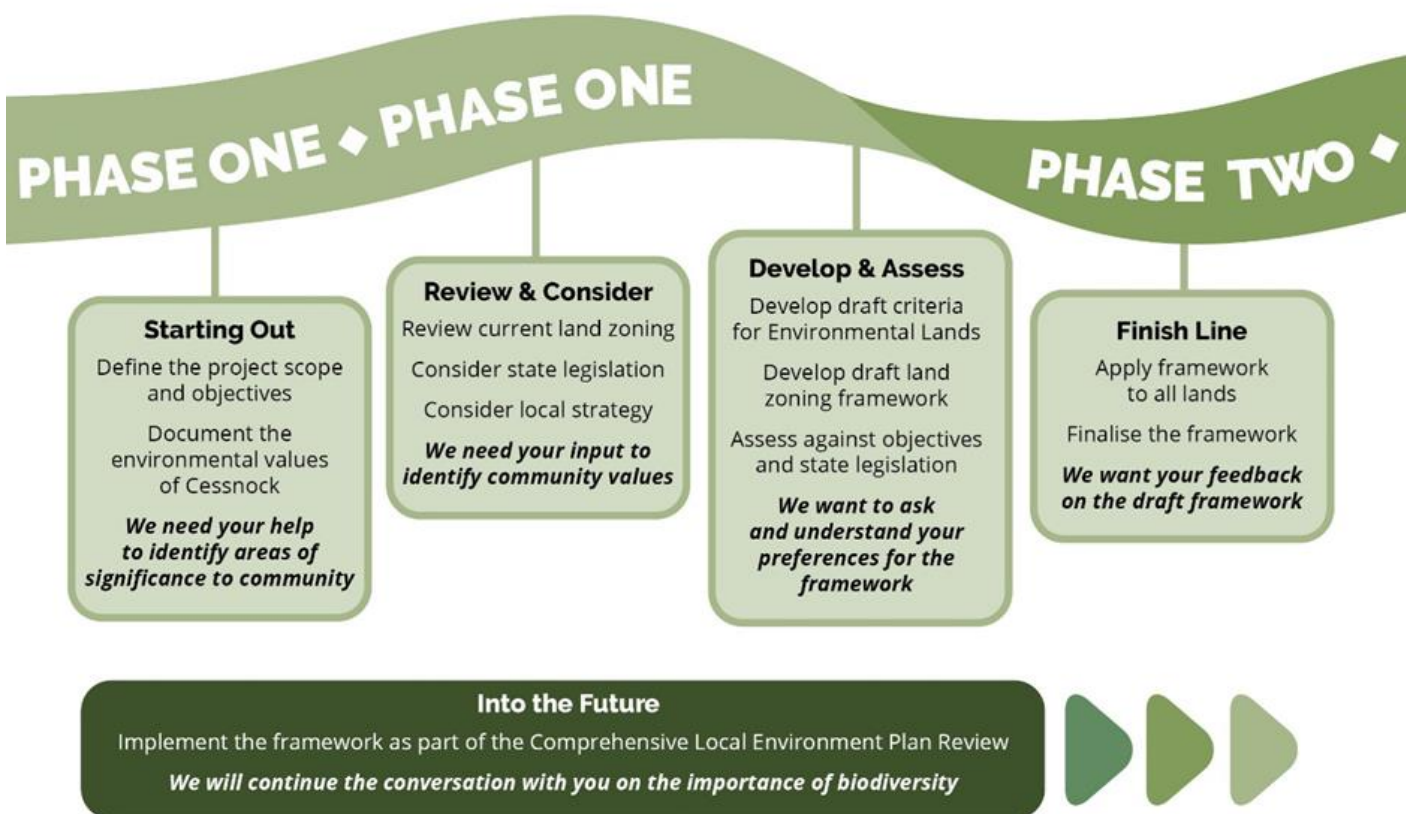
# 6. Community & Stakeholder Engagement

A comprehensive community and stakeholder engagement strategy was developed for the Study in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Strategy. The purpose of the consultation for Phase 1 of the Study was to:

- Encourage community and stakeholder input to the development of the environmental zoning framework including objectives, criteria and land uses
- Identify areas of environmental significance to the community
- Communicate the purpose of the study and the process for developing the land zoning framework
- Report back to community on the outcomes of community engagement and the next steps

The community and stakeholder engagement process will enable input throughout the Study (refer to **Figure 2**). This report only discusses Phase 1 of the community engagement process, which is nearing completion.

Figure 2: Engagement Process







*Source: John Spencer/DPIE*

A range of engagement tools and methods are being utilised to ensure community views and values are adequately considered as part of the Study (refer to **Table 1**).

**Table 1: Phase 1 Engagement Tools and Methods**

<p><b>Community Reference Groups</b></p>	<p>The groups consist of sixteen (16) members representing a cross section of the community including business and development, residents, agricultural interests, tourism, Aboriginal interests, wildlife and environmental groups.</p> <p>Three (3) workshop sessions have been held to date.</p> <p>Direct correspondence with members seeking feedback between meetings.</p>
<p><b>Have Your Say project webpage</b></p>	<p>A dedicated project webpage to provide information and encourage participation. The webpage included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of the Study</li> <li>• Timeline</li> <li>• How to get involved:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Community values survey</li> <li>○ Nomination form for community reference groups</li> <li>○ Interactive map to capture areas of environmental significance to the community</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Frequently asked questions about the Study and planning process;</li> <li>• Community engagement summary of results</li> <li>• Contact details for Council staff</li> <li>• Sign-up form to keep informed about the Study</li> <li>• Latest updates</li> </ul>

<b>Community values survey</b>	<p>Available from 18 November to 13 December 2020 seeking opinions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How important the natural environment is to the Cessnock LGA</li> <li>• How important a range of environmental attributes/characteristics are to the area</li> <li>• The expectations for environmental zones</li> <li>• What activities and facilities should be permitted within environmental zones</li> <li>• What activities should not be allowed within environmental zones</li> </ul> <p>137 surveys were completed.</p>
<b>Interactive map</b>	<p>Available from 26 August 2020.</p> <p>33 areas of environmental significance have been identified and generated 70 'Likes' as at May 2021.</p>
<b>Targeted stakeholder consultation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council</li> <li>• Council's Development Consultation Forum</li> <li>• Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Committee</li> <li>• Council staff - including workshops with the Development Services Team and Strategic Planning Team.</li> <li>• Councillors</li> <li>• Department of Planning, Industry and Environment</li> <li>• Local Land Services</li> </ul>

A range of communication tools and methods are being utilised to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be involved (refer to **Table 2**).

**Table 2: Phase 1 Communication Tools and Methods**

<b>Media releases</b>	<p>27 August 2020 Nominations open for Community Reference Groups</p> <p>14 September 2020 More time to nominate to be part of the Environmental Lands Study</p> <p>19 November 2020 Community feedback sought as part of Environmental Lands Study</p> <p>Copies of the media releases can be found in <b>Appendix A</b></p>
<b>Print advertising</b>	<p>9 September 2020 Call for community reference group nominations for the environmental lands study</p> <p>A copy of the advertisement can be found in <b>Appendix A</b></p>
<b>Social media</b>	<p>Facebook:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26 August - Nominations open for Community Reference Groups</li> <li>• 3 September - Nominations open for Community Reference Groups</li> <li>• 14 September - Nominations extended for Community Reference Groups</li> <li>• 20 November - Community survey open</li> </ul> <p>Twitter:</p>

<b>Social media continued</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 September - Nominations open for Community Reference Groups Instagram:</li> <li>27 August - Nominations open for Community Reference Groups</li> </ul> <p>Copies of the media releases can be found in <b>Appendix A</b></p>
<b>Website</b>	<p>From 26 August 2020</p> <p><a href="http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Council/Have-your-say/Environmental-Lands-Study">http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Council/Have-your-say/Environmental-Lands-Study</a></p>
<b>Direct mail/email/telephone call</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee</li> <li>Local Aboriginal Land Councils</li> <li>Environmental groups</li> <li>Business and industry associations</li> <li>Resident and ratepayers associations</li> <li>Community groups</li> <li>Wildlife groups</li> <li>Development and investment associations</li> <li>Government agencies</li> </ul>

## 6.1 What We Heard

The community has identified a number of areas as environmentally significant, including the Tomalpin Woodlands, Ellalong Lagoon, Bow Wow Gorge, Wollombi and areas of substantial remnant vegetation, biodiversity corridors and Aboriginal sites and places.

We have heard that the natural environment across the Cessnock LGA is important to our community. Specifically, we heard that the natural environment is important to lifestyle, character of the area, recreation, biodiversity, local economy, tourism, agriculture, Aboriginal heritage, scientific knowledge and to a lesser extent European heritage. This is consistent with CSP objective 3.1 *Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the rural character of the area*.

A consistent theme that emerged from the various engagement methods was the importance of balance between protecting the environment and the continuation of existing land management practices and uses. There is support for allowing compatible low-impact land uses to occur in the environmental zones.

We heard widespread support for nature, heritage and culture based activities and facilities within environmental zones, along with single houses, environmental and eco-tourist facilities. An engagement summary was made available on Council’s website in March 2021. The detailed engagement results are outlined in **Appendix B**.



*Source: John Spencer/DPIE*

# 7. Proposed Environmental Zones Framework

This section outlines the environmental zoning framework proposed for the E2 Environmental Conservation Zone, E3 Environmental Management Zone and E4 Environmental Living Zone. In developing the zoning framework for the environmental zones, Council considered community values, community and stakeholder feedback and the planning and legislative requirements. The framework is generally consistent with the State planning guidance, including the Northern Councils Report and the Planning Practice Note.

## 7.1 Environmental Zone Principals

The environmental zone principles have been developed to assist in decision-making and ensure consistency in the application of environmental zones. The principles will also ensure compliance with State planning guidance. The principles include:

1. An environmental zone may be applied if the primary use of the land is for environmental purposes and it meets one or more of the environmental criteria.
2. Where reasonable and feasible, the criteria will be verified as occurring on the land through a range of possible methods (e.g. ecological surveys and reports, aerial photography, Aboriginal field survey and reports) at the planning proposal stage.
3. More than one zone can be applied to properties (i.e. split zones), where the criteria and primary use of the land warrant it.
4. Mapped planning controls (i.e. LEP clause and map overlay) may be considered for certain attributes.
5. Public land may be zoned E2 or E3 despite being inconsistent with the criteria.
6. Private land may be zoned E2 or E3 despite being inconsistent with the criteria, only if it is consistent with a master plan, strategy, rezoning, development consent, designated offset area or a biodiversity corridor.
7. Council will employ the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) when making decisions regarding the application of environmental zones.
8. Council will consider adjoining land uses when recommending an environmental zone.

## 7.2 Environmental Zone Criteria

The environmental criteria have been developed with consideration to community values, the planning and legislative requirements and in consultation with stakeholders.

## E2 Environmental Conservation Zone

The E2 Environmental Conservation Zone is intended to protect land that has high conservation values and prevent development and/or actions that could damage, destroy or adversely affect its value. The use of this zone needs to be justified by appropriate evaluation of the area in terms of high ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic attributes.

The environmental criteria for the E2 Environmental Conservation Zone are shown in **Table 3**.

**Table 3: E2 Environmental Conservation Zone Criteria**

Criteria	Description
<b>Coastal Wetlands</b>	Land mapped as Coastal Wetlands in accordance with the <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Coastal Management) 2018</i> or equivalent future legislation.
<b>Threatened Ecological Communities</b>	Land containing vegetation communities listed as a Threatened Ecological Communities under the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> and/or the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> or equivalent future legislation.
<b>Key Threatened Species Habitat</b>	This criterion includes 'key habitats' for any listed threatened species and old-growth forests.
<b>Culturally significant lands and sites of Aboriginal significance</b>	Areas of culturally significant lands such as Aboriginal object sites, Aboriginal places of heritage significance, and other significant objects identified by the local Aboriginal community.
<b>Threatened Flora and Fauna Species</b>	Records of threatened flora and fauna species listed under the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> and/or the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> or equivalent future legislation.
<b>Lands that will be protected in perpetuity for the purposes of environmental conservation</b>	Lands that will be protected in perpetuity for the purposes of environmental conservation (e.g. Offset Sites, Stewardship Sites, and Set Aside Areas).

## E3 Environmental Management Zone

The E3 Environmental Management Zone is to be applied to land that has special ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic values, or land that is constrained by environmental hazards. This zone provides for a limited range of development that does not have an adverse effect on those values.

The environmental criteria for the E3 Environmental Management Zone are shown in **Table 4**.

**Table 4: E3 Environmental Management Zone Criteria**

Criteria	Description
<b>Riparian and estuarine vegetation and wetlands</b>	The watercourse plus 40m from the top of bank for 3 <sup>rd</sup> order streams or larger, comprising riparian and estuarine vegetation on waterfront land, consistent with the NSW <i>Water Management Act</i> 2000 or equivalent future legislation. Wetland areas other than those mapped as Coastal Wetlands under the <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Coastal Management)</i> 2018 or equivalent future legislation.
<b>Lands with environmental hazards in order to protect community and environmental health e.g. flooding, steep slopes etc.</b>	This criterion includes non-urban lands defined as 'floodway' and/or located in flood hazard categories H5 and H6. Lands with steep slopes (over 18 degrees).
<b>Wildlife habitat connectivity / biodiversity corridors</b>	Biodiversity corridors identified in the Cessnock Corridors Spatial Links Tool

## E4 Environmental Living Zone

The E4 Environmental Living Zone is intended for land with special environmental values and accommodates low impact residential development. The Northern Councils report recommended that the E4 zone be applied where the land contains attributes that are consistent with the Planning Practice Note. Council proposes to apply the E4 zone to land that contains attributes that are consistent with the Planning Practice Note.

### 7.3 Environmental Zone Objectives

The standard objectives for the zones continue to apply as outlined in the Standard Instrument. The additional local objectives proposed for the environmental zones are shown in green text in **Tables 5, 6 and 7** below. These additional local objectives reflect the proposed criteria and land uses for each of the environmental zones and have been developed in consultation with stakeholders.

**Table 5: E2 Zone Objectives**

<b>E2 – Environmental Conservation Zone</b>
To protect, manage and restore areas of high ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic values
To prevent development that could destroy, damage or otherwise have an adverse effect on those values
To protect, manage and restore Aboriginal cultural heritage, threatened ecological communities, key threatened species habitat, biodiversity corridors and important ecosystems
To encourage activities that meet the conservation objective of the zone

**Table 6: E3 Zone Objectives**

<b>E3 – Environmental Management Zone</b>
To protect, manage and restore areas with special ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic values
To provide for a limited range of development that does not have an adverse effect on those values
To protect, manage and restore Aboriginal cultural heritage, water quality, riparian and estuarine vegetation, biodiversity corridors and important ecosystems.
To recognise lands with environmental hazards in order to protect community and environmental health
To provide for low impact agricultural land uses on land with productive value.

**Table 7: E4 Zone Objectives**

<b>E4 – Environmental Living Zone</b>
To provide for low-impact residential development in areas with special ecological, scientific or aesthetic values
To protect, manage and restore biodiversity corridors and facilitate species movement

## 7.4 Environmental Zone Land Uses

The recommended land uses for the environment zones and inclusion in the Cessnock LEP are outlined in Table 8. The land uses that are shown in bold are mandatory land uses as outlined in the Standard Instrument. Any land uses must be consistent with the intent and objectives of the zone.

Table 8 Land Uses for Environmental Zones

Zone	2. Permitted without consent	3. Permitted with consent	4. Prohibited
E2 – Environmental Conservation		Bed and breakfast accommodation Building identification sign Business identification sign Community facilities Dwelling houses Eco-tourist facilities Emergency services facilities Environmental facilities <b>Environmental protection works</b> Flood mitigation works Home businesses Home occupations <b>Oyster aquaculture</b> Roads	<b>Business premises</b> <b>Hotel or motel accommodation</b> <b>Industries</b> <b>Multi dwelling housing</b> <b>Pond-based aquaculture;</b> <b>Recreation facilities (major)</b> <b>Residential flat buildings</b> <b>Restricted premises</b> <b>Retail premises</b> <b>Seniors housing</b> <b>Service stations</b> <b>Tank-based aquaculture</b> <b>Warehouse or distribution centres</b> <b>Any other development not specified in item 2 or 3</b>



Zone	2. Permitted without consent	3. Permitted with consent	4. Prohibited
E3– Environmental Management	<p><b>Home Occupations</b></p>	<p>Bed and breakfast accommodation            Building identification sign            Business identification sign            Camping grounds            Community facilities  <b>Dwelling houses</b>            Eco-tourist facilities            Emergency services facilities            Environmental facilities  <b>Environmental protection works</b>            Extensive agriculture            Farm buildings            Farm stay accommodation            Flood mitigation works            Home businesses            Home industry            Information and education facilities            Kiosks  <b>Oyster aquaculture</b>  <b>Pond-based aquaculture</b>  <b>Roads</b>            Roadside stalls            Tank-based aquaculture            Tourist and visitor accommodation</p>	<p><b>Industries</b>  <b>Multi dwelling housing</b>  <b>Residential flat buildings</b>  <b>Retail premises</b>  <b>Seniors housing</b>  <b>Service stations</b>  <b>Warehouse or distribution centres</b>  <b>Any other development not specified in item 2 or 3</b>            Backpackers' accommodation            Hotel or motel accommodation            Serviced apartments</p>

Zone	2. Permitted without consent	3. Permitted with consent	4. Prohibited
E4 – Environmental Living	<p><b>Home Occupations</b></p>	<p>Bed and breakfast accommodation  Bee keeping  Building identification sign  Business identification sign  <b>Dwelling houses</b>  Eco-tourist facilities  <b>Environmental protections works</b>  Flood mitigation works  Home business  Home industry  <b>Road</b>  Roadside stalls  <b>Oyster aquaculture</b>  <b>Pond-based aquaculture</b>  <b>Tank-based aquaculture</b></p>	<p><b>Industries</b>  <b>Service stations</b>  <b>Warehouse or distribution centres</b>  <b>Any other development not specified in item 2 or 3</b></p>

## 7.5 Environmental Zone Lot Sizes

The current lots sizes for the environmental zones in Cessnock are shown in **Table 9**. The proposed lot sizes for the environmental zones will be determined during Phase 2 of the Study.

Following the development of the zoning maps, Council staff will be able to interrogate the lot sizes and lot arrangements for each of the zones in order to determine the most appropriate minimum lot sizes. Council staff also need to consider how lot sizes may affect the objectives of the environmental zones.

**Table 9: Current Cessnock Environmental Zone Lot Sizes**

Zone	Lot size (in hectares)
<b>E2 – Environmental Conservation</b>	80
<b>E3 – Environmental Management</b>	40
<b>E4 – Environmental Living</b>	80**

\*\* Negotiated lot size for one development in Cessnock

## 8. Next Steps

Following the exhibition of the Environmental Zoning Framework Report, a further report to Council is proposed detailing any submissions that are received during the exhibition period. The Study will continue following the exhibition of the draft Environmental Zoning Framework Report. During Phase 2 of the Study, Council will:

- analyse the spatial layers;
- prepare a report documenting the environmental values of the LGA (appendix to final report);
- prepare environmental zoning maps for the LGA according to the criteria and principles;
- review and recommend appropriate minimum lot sizes;
- Continue with community and stakeholder engagement activities; and
- Prepare a final recommendations report for public exhibition.

# Appendix A: Communication Materials

## Media Releases

### Nominations open for Community Reference Groups

Published on 07 August 2020



Council is calling on residents to nominate for the Environmental Lands Study Community Reference Groups. The groups are being established to assist with the Environmental Lands Study Council is commencing.

The study will seek to identify lands of high environmental value and develop an environmental zoning framework for the future.

Council's General Manager, Lotta Jackson said it's an important study as the Cessnock Local Government Area is home to a unique and diverse range of flora and fauna, including threatened species.

"Our local bushland is rich in biodiversity. As we plan for the future we need to ensure we know where our environmentally significant lands are and take steps to protect them."

Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob Pynsent said Council is committed to establishing environmental zones that enable flexibility of land uses balanced with meeting environmental objectives.

The establishment of the community reference groups is just one of many ways Council is involving the community. There will be a number of opportunities throughout the study for residents to provide feedback:

Phase one will involve seeking community feedback on identifying areas of environmental significance and importance to the community. This will help establish the proposed environmental zone values, objectives, criteria, principles, lot sizes and land uses.

During phase two the community will be asked to provide feedback on any proposed environmental zones and recommendations.

Interested and want to know more? Please read the [FAQs](#).

Nominations for the community reference groups must be submitted by Sunday 13 September. For more information visit Council's ["Have your say" page](#).

### More time to nominate to be part of the Environmental Lands Study

Published on 14 September 2020



Council has extended the nomination period for those interested in joining the Environmental Lands Study Community Reference Groups. Nominations are now open until Sunday 20 September.

The groups are being established to assist with the Environmental Lands Study Council is commencing. The study will seek to identify lands of high environmental value and develop an environmental zoning framework for the future.

Council's General Manager, Lotta Jackson is encouraging interested residents to consider nominating and joining the conversation.

"We would really like to have a diverse range of people involved in these community reference groups and want to ensure everyone who is interested has been given an opportunity to submit their nomination."

The study is extremely important for the Cessnock Local Government Area which is home to a unique and diverse range of flora and fauna, including threatened species.

Residents will be provided a number of opportunities throughout the study to provide feedback, including:

Phase one will involve seeking community feedback on identifying areas of environmental significance and importance to the community. This will help establish the proposed environmental zone values, objectives, criteria, principles, lot sizes and land uses. During phase two the community will be asked to provide feedback on any proposed environmental zones and recommendations.

Nominations for the community reference groups must be submitted by Sunday 20 September. For more information visit Council's ["Have your say" page](#).

# Community feedback sought as part of Environmental Lands Study

Published on 19 November 2020



Council has opened a survey to better understand community views on the natural environment in the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA). The results will assist Council in the development of the Environmental Lands Study.

The study seeks to identify lands of high environmental value in consultation with the local community and develop an environmental zoning framework for the future.

The short survey was put together with the help of community reference group members. These groups are made up of members of the community who nominated to assist Council and be involved with the development of the study.

Council's Acting Director of Environment and Planning Martin Johnson encouraged residents to join the conversation.

"The survey will only take about five minutes to complete but provide critical information to Council. We want to see a significant community response and hear a variety of community views."

The survey asks a range of questions from getting residents perspectives on the importance of native wildlife, natural wetlands and native plants to asking about expectations around Environmental Zones and how they operate.

The survey will be open until midnight on Sunday 13 December. For more information on the study visit [Council's website](#) or to do the survey [click here](#).

# Print Advertisement

9 September 2020, Cessnock Advertiser



## CALL FOR COMMUNITY REFERENCE GROUP NOMINATIONS FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL LANDS STUDY

Council is calling on residents to nominate for the Environmental Lands Study community reference groups. The groups are being established to assist with the Environmental Lands Study Council is commencing. The study will seek to identify lands of high environmental value and develop an environmental zoning framework for the future.

The establishment of the community reference groups is just one of many ways Council is involving the community. There will be a number of opportunities throughout the study for residents to provide feedback:

- Phase one will involve seeking community feedback on identifying areas of environmental significance and importance to the community. This will help establish the proposed environmental zone values, objectives, criteria, principles, lot sizes and land uses.
- During phase two, the community will be asked to provide feedback on any proposed environmental zones and recommendations.

**Nominations for the community reference groups must be submitted by Sunday, 13 September 2020.** For more information, visit Council's website at [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Council/Have-your-say/Environmental-Lands-Study](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Council/Have-your-say/Environmental-Lands-Study).

Any enquiries should be directed to Council's Senior Environmental Planner on 4993 4100.

## REGULATION OF TRAFFIC

In accordance with Part 8 of the Roads Act 1993, notice is hereby given of the following temporary road closures in Wollombi, for a road event:

<b>Event:</b>	Wollombi Wild Ride 2020
<b>Closure Time &amp; Date:</b>	7am to 1pm Saturday 26 September 2020.
<b>Affected streets:</b>	Yango Creek Road Upper Yango Creek Road Dry Arm Track Boree Valley Road Moores Road
<b>Purpose / Authority:</b>	Regulation of traffic for the purpose of enabling Public Roads to be used for a race between bicycles with the written permission of the Commissioner of Police, in accordance with Section 115 of the Road Transport Act 2013.
<b>By Authority of:</b>	Lotta Jackson, General Manager

 [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au)

 62-78 Vincent St, Cessnock

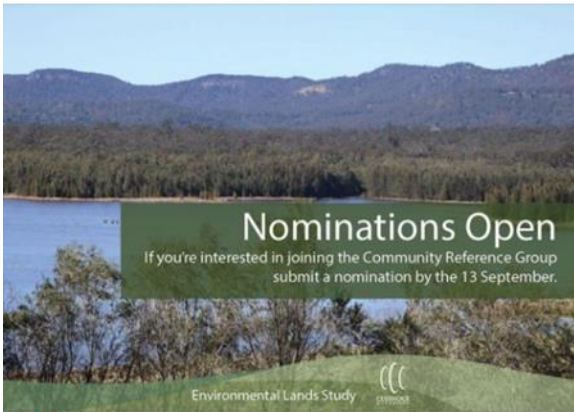
 02 4993 4100

# Social Media

## Facebook

**Cessnock City Council**  
26 August 2020 · 🌐

We're calling on residents to nominate for the Environmental Lands Study Community Reference Groups. The groups are being established to assist us with the study that will identify lands of high environmental value and lead to the development of an environmental zoning framework for the future. For more information, to nominate or to learn more visit <http://ow.ly/Ctzi50Baas6>



👍❤️👍 26      24 comments 9 shares

**Cessnock City Council**  
3 September 2020 · 🌐

Don't forget nominations are now open for those interested in joining the Environmental Lands Study Community Reference Groups. The groups are being established to assist us with the study that will identify lands of high environmental value and lead to the development of an environmental zoning framework for the future. Find out more here <http://ow.ly/Ctzi50Baas6>



👍 1

**Cessnock City Council**  
Published by Annaleize Hambling · September 14, 2020 · 🌐

We've extended the nomination period for those interested in joining the Environmental Lands Study Community Reference Groups. Nominations are now open until this Sunday. Nominate now or to find out more visit <https://bit.ly/3bWeAmI>



CESSNOCK.NSW.GOV.AU  
**More time to nominate to be part of the Environmental Lands Study**  
Council has extended the nomination period for those interested in joining the Environ...

1,933 People Reached      116 Engagements      [Boost Again](#)

Boosted on September 14, 2020      Completed  
By Annaleize Dipolito

People Reached	1.2K	Post Engagements	40
----------------	------	------------------	----

**Cessnock City Council**  
Published by Hootsuite · November 20, 2020 · 🌐

We're doing a survey to better understand community views on the natural environment in the Cessnock LGA. The results will assist us in the development of the Environmental Lands Study.

The study seeks to identify lands of high environmental value in consultation with the local community and develop an environmental zoning framework for the future. To take the survey or for more info visit <http://ow.ly/y3yD50C0T0I>



CESSNOCK.NSW.GOV.AU  
**Community feedback sought as part of Environmental Lands Study**      [Learn More](#)


6,109 People Reached      798 Engagements      [Boost Again](#)


Boosted on November 20, 2020      Completed  
By Gray Clack




People Reached	5K	Link Clicks	131
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[View Results](#)

# Instagram

 **cessnockcitycouncil** ...



Liked by [gl\\_radford](#) and **others**

**cessnockcitycouncil** We're calling on residents to nominate for the Environmental Lands Study Community Reference Group. It's to assist us with the study we're kicking off that will identify lands of high environmental value and lead to the development of an environmental zoning framework. Find out how you can be involved via our website. 📄 📄

27 August 2020

# Twitter

 **Cessnock Council** @CessnockCouncil · Sep 4, 2020 ...

Don't forget nominations are now open for those interested in joining the Environmental Lands Study Community Reference Groups. [ow.ly/Ctzi50Baas6](https://ow.ly/Ctzi50Baas6)



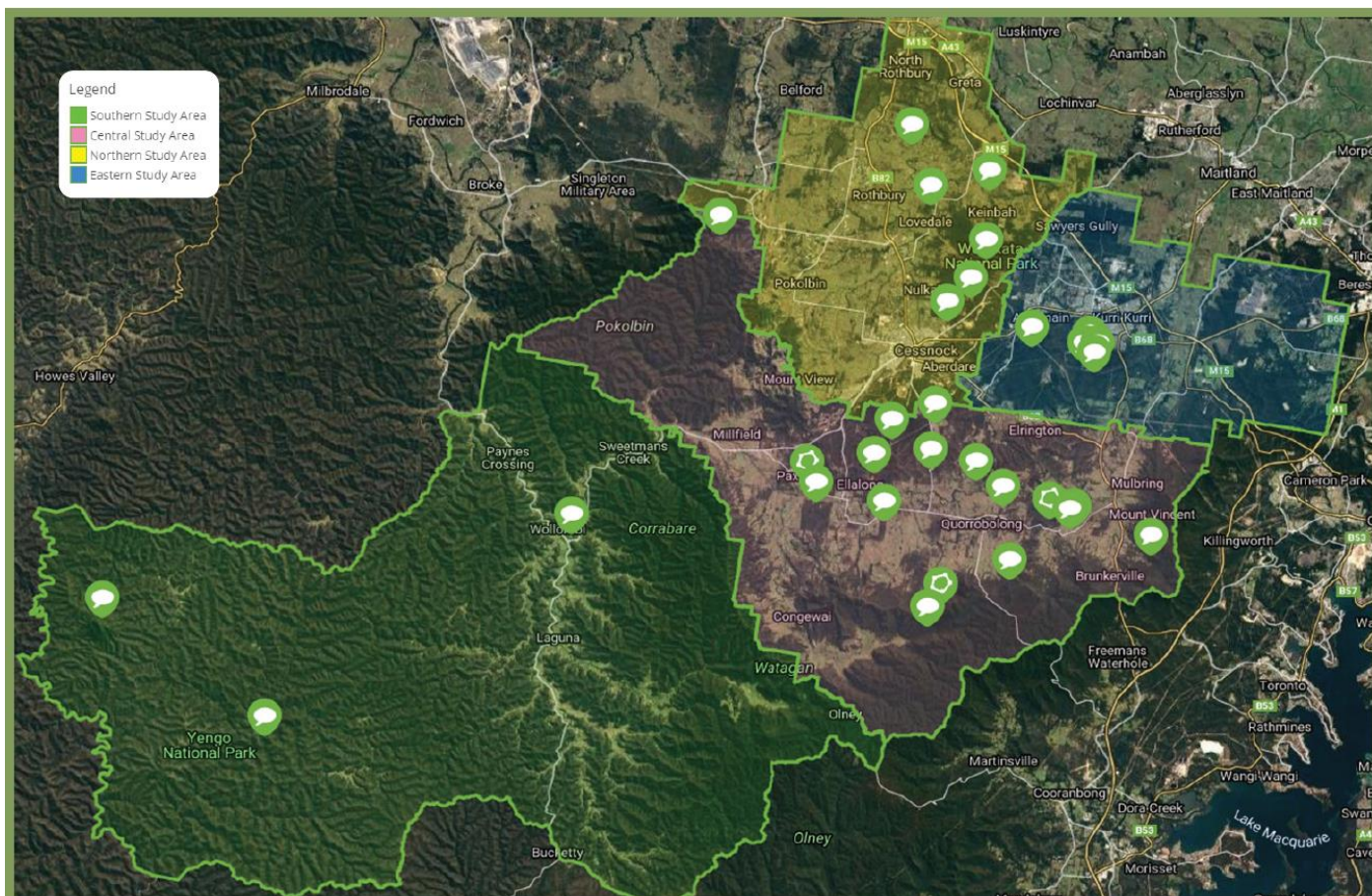
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# Appendix B: Detailed Community Engagement Results

## Interactive Map

A total of 33 areas were identified as being environmentally significant with 70 reactions ('likes') to the identified areas. The comments by study area are detailed below.



### Southern Study Area

Comments	Likes
Mount Yengo is culturally significant to the Aboriginal community. This is the location where the Baiame returned to the spirits after creating the lakes, rivers, mountains and caves of our area.	3
Yengo National Park is an important part of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Listed Area.	2
Wollombi heritage village is of significance	4

# Central Study Area

Comment	Likes
The Tomalpin Woodlands Must be prioritised as one of the most important sites in Australia for two Critically Endangered birds, the Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot, and is a regional stronghold for other threatened woodland birds such as Black-chinned Honeyeaters, Brown Treecreepers and Dusky Woodswallows. S AVE THIS HABITAT SAVE THESE UNIQUE BIRDS	0
Ellalong Lagoon is a significant environmental area to me	6
Bow Wow Gorge is a very important cultural and environmental asset in Cessnock.	5
The Tomalpin Woodlands is the largest unfragmented forested remnant on the floor of the Hunter Valley and is a regional biodiversity hotspot which contains five Endangered Ecological Communities (EECs), seven threatened flora species, and over 30 threatened fauna species listed under the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016.	2
The Tomalpin Woodlands is one of the most important sites in Australia for two Critically Endangered birds, the Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot, and is a regional stronghold for other threatened woodland birds such as Black-chinned Honeyeaters, Brown Treecreepers and Dusky Woodswallows. The Tomalpin Woodlands was the only place where Regent Honeyeaters were found breeding in the 2018/19 season; the entire population may only comprise 350 wild individuals. This is an extremely important area	2
The Tomalpin Woodlands is the largest unfragmented forested remnant on the floor of the Hunter Valley and is a regional biodiversity hotspot which contains five Endangered Ecological Communities (EECs), seven threatened flora species, and over 30 threatened fauna species listed under the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016. Please do what is right, and protect these vulnerable species by safeguarding their habitat.	3
The Tomalpin woodlands is a crucial home for the Regent Honeyeater and the Swift parrot as well as a number of other threatened birds and animals. Please protect this area!	0
	1
This forms part of a biodiversity corridor	1
Broken Back Ranges Visually and environmentally significant.	3
This lookout provides great views across Cessnock, Kitchener, Mount View and Pokolbin but it is spoiled by graffiti, rubbish and burned out vehicles.	0
This crown lands owned parcel forms a significant link between the Watagans and Werataka National Parks.	4
This is a very important and popular lookout.	0
Austar Coal is a significant land owner of environmental lands across Cessnock. Council should engage with Austar to rezone environmental land in their ownership to an appropriate environmental zone.	3
There are 2 caves with aboriginal rock paintings in this area. One cave is "men business" the other one is "women business". This is of national significance. Please don't tell Rio Tinto.	3
Beautiful walks behind Old Brush Farm. Ferny valleys, unique microclimates.	0
Roadside Planting by Mount Vincent Landcare Inc. along both sides of Sandy Creek Road in this vicinity	0
Roadside Planting along the length of Edward Street, using Australian Native Plants completed by Mount Vincent Landcare Inc.	1
Roadside planting along Rodney Road, completed by local community group, Mount Vincent Landcare Inc.	0

## Northern Study Area

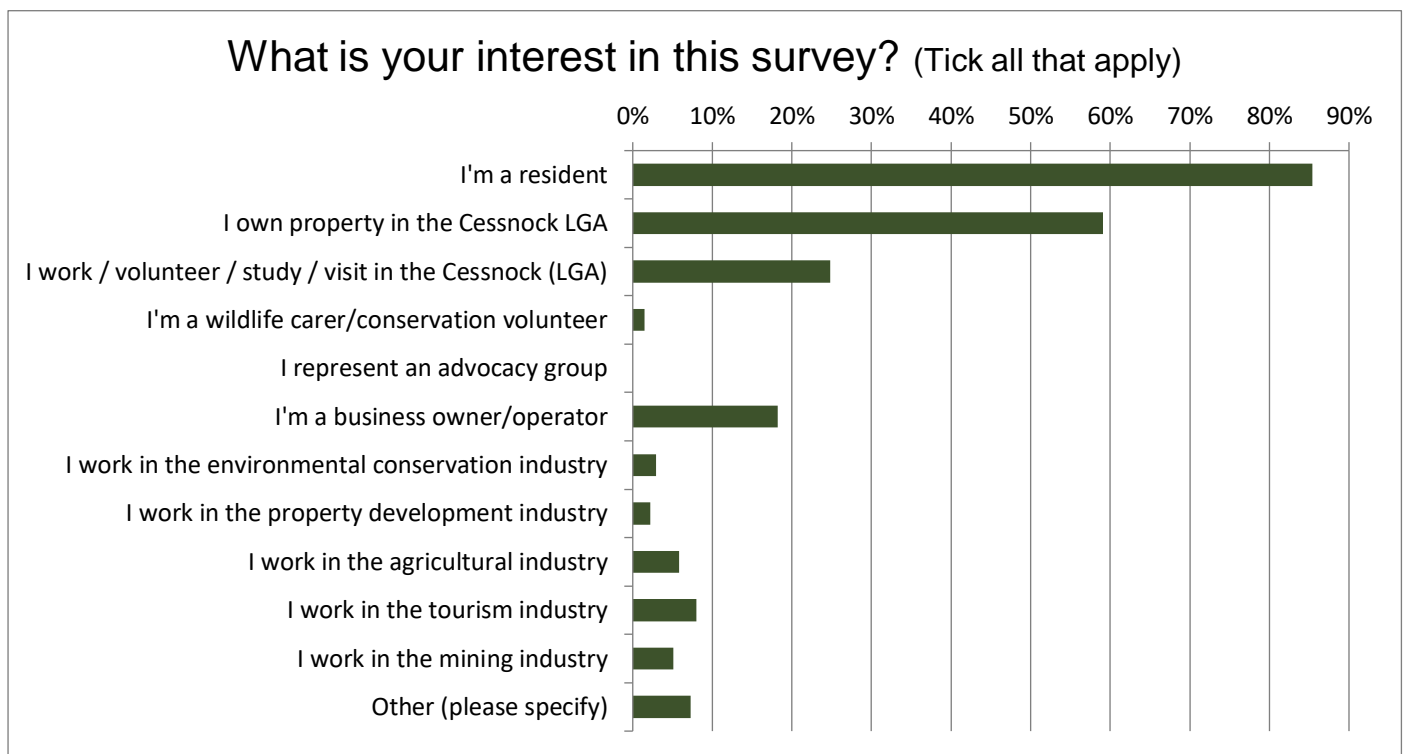
Comments	Likes
Tomalpin Woodlands is a priority environmental zone for regent honeyeaters and swift parrots - two critically endangered birds. This area is the largest block of natural woodlands remaining on the floor of the Hunter Valley. It needs to be protected. Cessnock area is a destination for many birds. This is a wonderful attraction please ensure it remains "natural" for birds and doesn't fall to clearing. After the bushfires of the the 2019-20 season our woodland birds need our help more than ever.	1
Critical habitat and corridor connections for our unique flora and fauna. The Tomalpin Woodlands was the only place where Regent Honeyeaters were found breeding in the 2018/19 season; the entire population may only comprise 350 wild individuals so this was an immensely important	2
Wonderful news for our flora and fauna that Cessnock City is devoting land for preservation. After a mining wasteland the land will thrive and support endangered birds and animals. Thank you to CCC, for a beautiful green space for now and the future.	1
There is a very old scar tree here and Australian native orchids.	0
Werakata National Park is very important but should be more open to public use such as horse riding.	0
Undergrowth and grass on private properties all through the vineyard area should be allowed to be kept under control to make properties as fire safe as possible.	0

## Eastern Study Area

Comments	Likes
Tomalpin Woodlands are a unique area of unequalled importance in Australia as habitat frequently used by 2 critically endangered parrots - the Regent Honeyeater & the Swift Parrot. The Tomalpin Woodlands was the only place where Regent Honeyeaters were found breeding in the 2018/19 season; the entire population may only comprise 350 wild individuals so this was an immensely important breeding event. We have so little woodland left.	2
This is a critically important environmental for up to 100 bird species and innumerable plant and animal species.	1
This area is vital habitat for the endangered Regent Honeyeater & Swift Parrot and it would be appropriate to make sure this area is protected for future generations	4
The Tomalpin Woodlands is the largest unfragmented forested remnant on the floor of the Hunter Valley and is a regional biodiversity hotspot which contains five Endangered Ecological Communities (EECs), seven threatened flora species, and over 30 threatened fauna species listed under the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016.	
The Tomalpin Woodlands was the only place where Regent Honeyeaters were found breeding in the 2018/19 season; the entire population may only comprise 350 wild individuals.	2
My sons and I have been observing nature in the Kurri-Cessnock bush since the early 1990s. We have records going back several decades. For bird watching, there is no better place than the woodlands around Mt Tomalpin. It is prime habitat for two nationally endangered birds: the Regent Honeyeater and the Swift Parrot -and many NSW threatened species as well. We observed the Regent Honeyeaters here in the summer months 2018-2019 and noted that many other birds were there as well.	6

# Community Values Survey

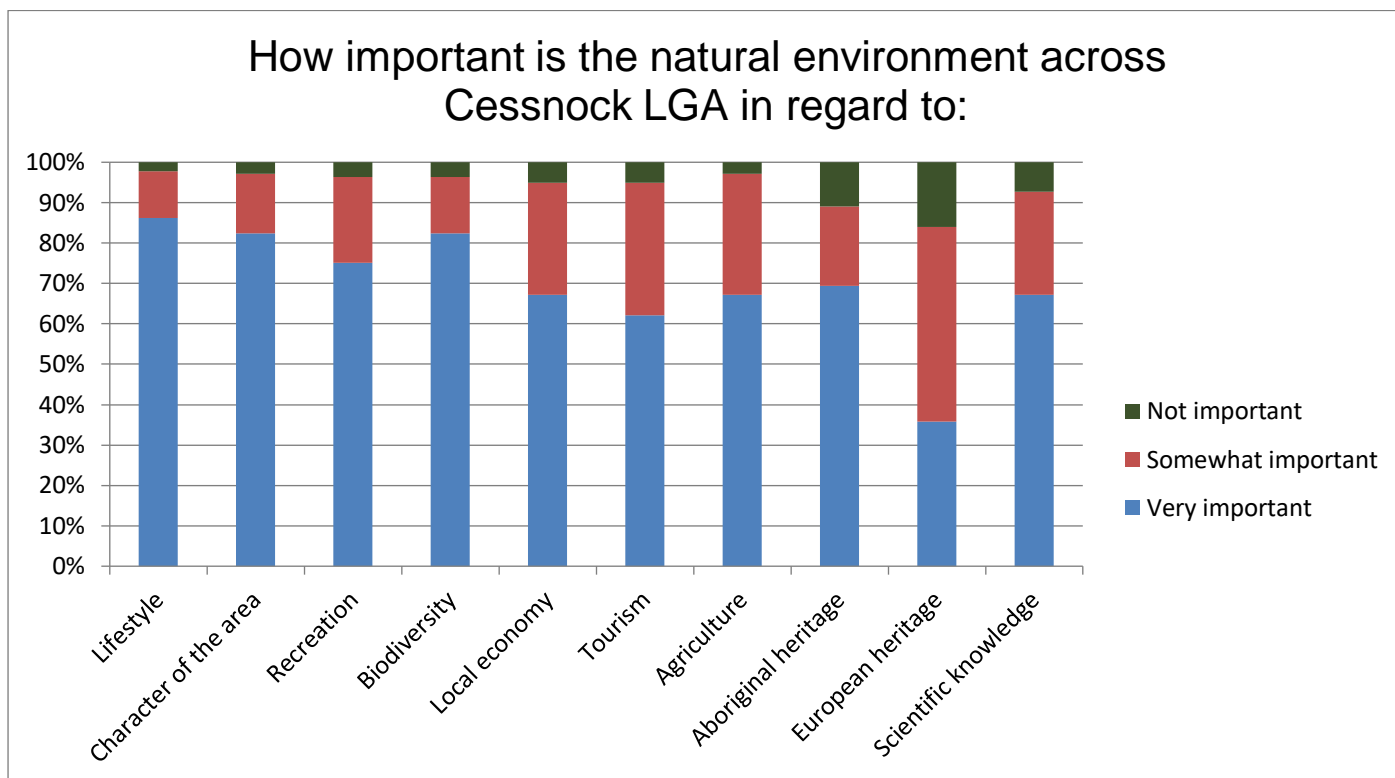
**Q1: What is your interest in this survey? (Tick all that apply)**



**Other:**

- Accounting
- I am in early education
- I am a Wonnarua Elder
- I did work in Tourism until my recent resignation from my position at the HVVC due to the lack of Value for Honesty through council departments
- Looking to become a property owner within Cessnock LGA
- I work for government
- I am about to be a resident
- Photographer
- Forestry and Aboriginal cultural heritage conservation
- Forestry and Aboriginal cultural heritage

**Q2: How important is the natural environment across Cessnock LGA in regard to:**



**Please specify any other reasons the natural environment is important:**

Maintains biodiversity and life

we must save the rare animals in Pokolbin state forest rock wallabies koala glossy black cookies spotted tail quolls

It's good for the children of the LGA, to learn about, play in and explore.

When people learn to appreciate the natural beauty of the environment- they are more likely to engage with pressing issues such as climate change

To support children in developing their knowledge of our local heritage, sustainability and biodiversity of our bush lands

Through having access to natural bushland our children will learn to be active agents of change. Change in acceptance of climate change, sustainable practices, taking care of our unique landscape and fossil quarry, Mt Tomalpin or as we loving know it Tumlbee!!!!

The natural environment is good for families. Raising children and community.

Endangered species

Protection of endangered species  
Connecting people with the land

sustainability

To keep a balance between development and bushland. By that I mean development including light industrial should not be totally destroyed by overzealous conservation.

Flora and fauna

My great grandfather was a bullock driver on the now watagan forest, we grew up walking through the vegetation of Kitchener and learning from my grandfather and father about it all. It's important.

---

**I bought out here SPECIFICALLY for the Natural Environment surrounding the area, absolutely DISGUSTED with the CONCRETE JUNGLE being created around Me lately though!?!**

---

**mental health, clean air, lowering temperatures**

---

**It would make a great family area.**

**It would also be a great place for tourist that was physically and visually different than vineyards**

---

**more wetlands and showing the community that we are trying to preserve the local environment rather than just built everything up**

---

**I'm concerned about the total clearance of every tree when developing new area for housing. What about leaving corridors for animals and birds**

---

**I moved here because of the Cessnock is close to all the major hubs this side of Sydney, however it's also not over developed and still offers the more laid back appeal of more regional areas. I like the current balance**

---

**Retention of wildlife corridors and the natural heritage is imperative if we wish to continue to live in an area that develops in an intelligent and timely manner.**

**Cessnock is the closest town to Sydney that has managed to retain some of its Colonial history within our LGA and managed to protect what is left of the ancient history of our First People.**

**We also hold the history of the early industrial revolution in our underground mining industry drawn from its roots in Northern England and Wales.**

**A large community of our families have their origin in the Convict story, from both the Coal River (Hunter) and the Great North Road from Sydney to Wollombi,**

**All of these stories are steeped in history and should be recorded and preserved as roots of Cessnock's society.**

---

**So little of it is left and in the context of a climate crisis, we need to save all that we have left.**

---

**The Traditional lore and customs of this land need to be recognised. Humans have raped the land for economic value.**

---

**heat reduction - more trees reduces this,**

**Maintaining water quality and stream health.**

---

**To protect the systems that sustain us and everything else. Water sheds, air sheds etc.**

---

**Education. Climate. Occupation and interest for elderly and retired.**

---

**Maintains habitation for our animals that are being pushed out of their natural environment for housing construction**

---

**Adapting to impacts of climate change and water security**

---

**To pass on and show future generations**

---

**To help maintain the environment and ecosystems, animal habits and stop animal extinction.**

**To save our plant.**

**Maintaining the natural environment keeps us alive, no planet, and no life.**

**K**

**To keep people healthy.**

---

**Native wildlife depend on it**

---

**Also important in relation to Education and Natural History**

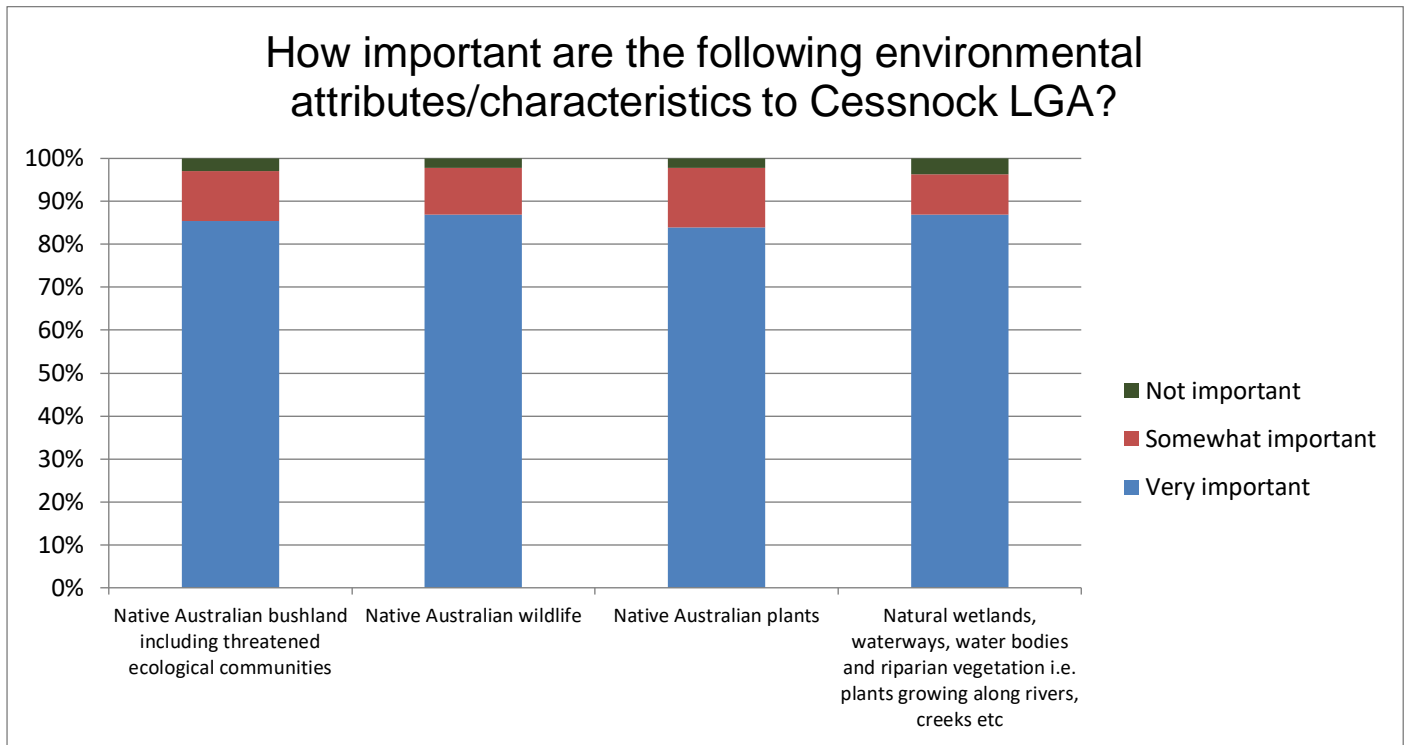
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Open spaces where we can walk and take in the natural environment are essential to mental health but also to the creatures and native plants that live there.

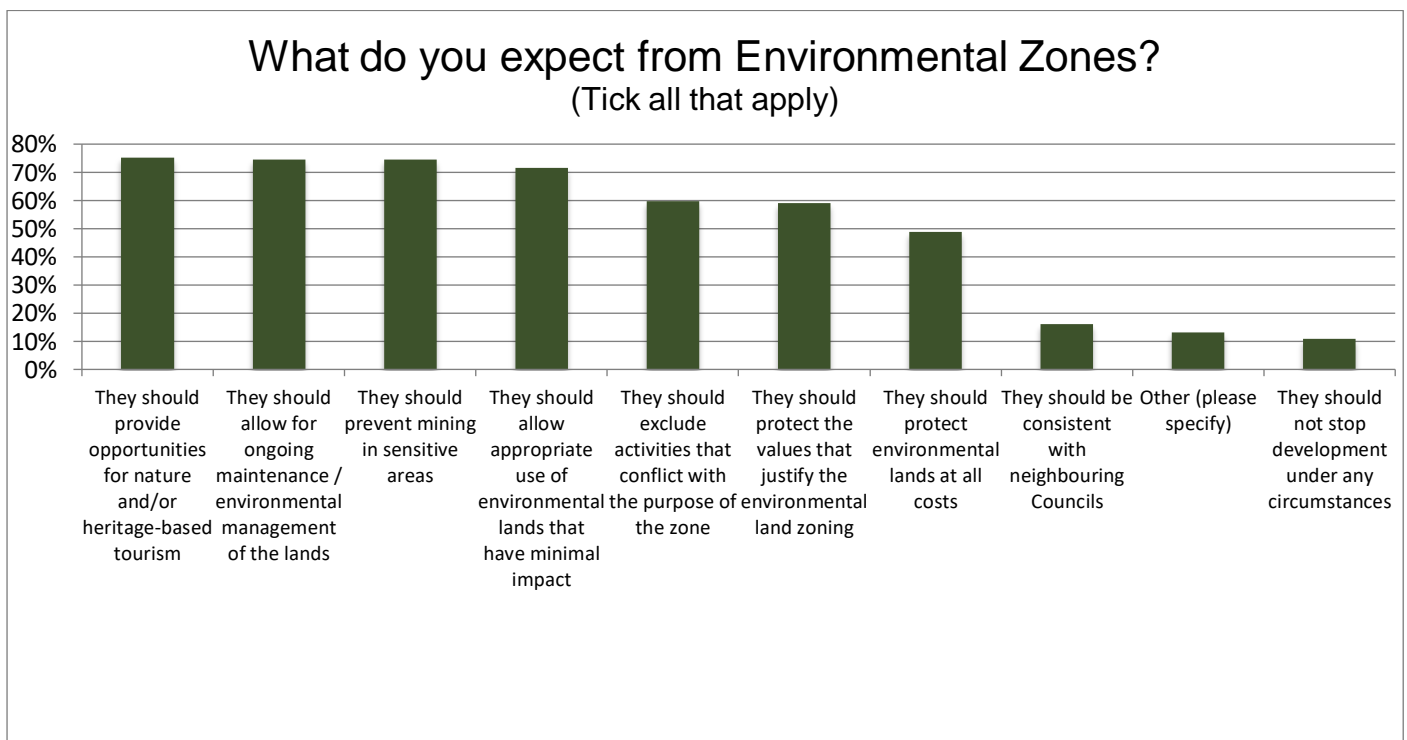
The Aboriginal cultural landscape, connections between Aboriginal sites/places and natural places. Creation beings in the landscape. The scenic beauty of the landscape.

The natural environment, particularly a healthy natural environment, is important to the battle against climate change.

**Q3: How important are the following environmental attributes/characteristics to Cessnock LGA?**



**Q4: What do you expect from Environmental Zones? (Tick all that apply)**



**Other:**

---

Vegetation corridors should be maintained/revegetated for native flora/fauna.

---

They should practice proper forestry and land management not be conservation by neglect. Overgrown bush is not good land management practice and is completely at odds with how First Nations people managed this area.

---

we need to stop dogs running free in wildlife's areas

---

There is a great opportunity to provide the community with nature walks while educating them about the natural environment and the importance of preserving it. Encouraging people to connect with these areas for fitness, health, emotional wellbeing helps them understand why these areas are important. Without that buy in from the people, you will be fighting a losing battle. Sadly, people have lost connection with nature and that's why the majority of people have not voted in the past for preservation and tackling human induced climate change.

---

Allow for sufficient clearing to deter/prevent fire

---

I would like to see Indigenous land practices recognised and included in any land zoning

---

Heritage based tourism in the sense that it is particularly about our development of towns in the 18th and 19th centuries. Particular focus should be on our coal mining past

---

Views from vantage points in environmentally valuable areas should be respected when developments are proposed

---

The public should be able to use the land e.g. Walking trails, picnic areas, whilst protecting animals and plants

---

Promote recreational activities.

---

They (Decision Makers) should learn the lore of this land.

---

They should be a refuge for native animals which includes excluding feral species and domestic predators.

---

They should consider long term rather than short term effects of change of use

---

Councils should check on waterways that have invasive weeds in them that could affect livestock/native plants further up the creeks/rivers. For example in Miller Park there is a huge infestation of green cestrum, a weed poisonous to cattle and capable of spreading into rural lands from this point.

---

Protect Aboriginal Cultural landscapes and the connections to cultural heritage sites and places. Ancestral beings in the landscape. The scenic beauty of the region

---

Consider Aboriginal cultural heritage as an integral part of environmental Zones

---

Environmental zones should be development to be reflective of the specific circumstances of our local government area and should represent the diversity and uniqueness of the landscape, both within the LGA and comparatively to other LGAs.

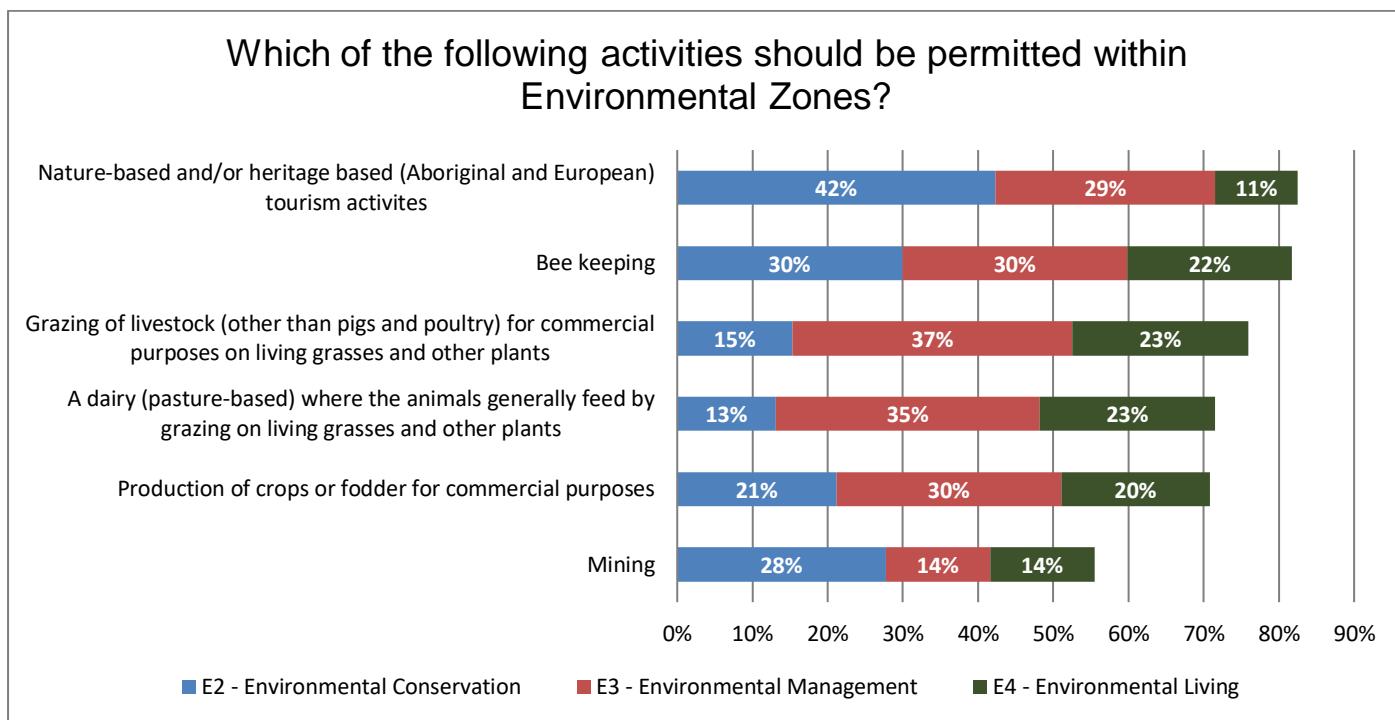
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They should not undermine the intent of the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act as a compensatory Act for Aboriginal People of NSW.

---



**Q5: Which of the following activities should be permitted within Environmental Zones?**



Please specify any conditions:

**Nature-based and/or heritage based (Aboriginal and European) tourism activities**

Walking only trails.

Residents before environment

Why can I tick only one zone?

Limited numbers, any fees go to monitoring and management of area

Let the community know where these areas are and give them access to get them on your side- you might even find if you can make them safe and accessible then you might even get the community onside for fun, working bees.

In Consultation with relevant indigenous groups

Small scale

Sensible management. I.e. not catering to minority groups with their personal agendas. particularly those insisting almost any area has important aboriginal heritage

no new roads or anything other than pedestrian access

Area should be available to all residents, existing lagoon available for non-motorised use e.g. canoe, sailing

On the advice of the experts in these fields, and with the permission of the Native Title Owners and other Aboriginal Custodians of the area. Consultation in all fields is imperative.

Should not necessarily mean structures are allowed e.g. accommodation - may be just day tours, or low impact structures.

Must limit impact where possible. Should tourism be allowed in E2, 3 and 4?

Designated areas only, litter compliance, enforcement of rules.

This should be permissible within all environmental zones.

## **Production of crops or fodder for commercial purposes**

---

**Regenerative methods only**

---

**Farmers need to work WITH the land rather than against it. Encourage permaculture farming and principles. Educate. Plenty of examples of old school farmers who are now learning the importance of soil biodiversity. If a farmer doesn't get the importance of that, they should be given every opportunity to educate themselves about that. Time to take back control from commercial interests that lead farmers astray in this area e.g. big herbicide companies etc.**

---

**again in moderation**

---

**Not broad acre planting**

---

**Limits on areas allowed to be cleared for crops**

---

**No cattle or crops, botanical garden would be lovely**

---

**To support local farming to retain the rural landscape of the LGA with the protection of the natural environment and wildlife corridors and bushlands given first considerations.**

---

**Can't see cropping supporting environmental values**

---

**This use is not appropriate**

---

**Don't allow intensive ag or crops but maybe high value specialised crops that can be produced without land clearing.**

---

**This could be permissible within both the E3 and E4 zones as a not all cropping operations are broad acre.**

---

## **Grazing of livestock (other than pigs and poultry) for commercial purposes on living grasses and other plants**

---

**Add pigs and poultry**

---

**Regenerative methods only**

---

**Find a way for animals to work with the natural environment rather than against it**

---

**It is vastly important to allow regulated grazing to help minimise fire danger from overgrown bush areas**

---

**Keep stock out of waterways at all times**

---

**Limits on numbers to prevent land degradation**

---

**Limited and periodic stocking only**

---

**Area sizes limited for grazing**

---

**Not engaging public**

---

**The above activities should not be conducted in Environmentally protected lands, and native grasses, trees and plants should be protected at all costs**

---

**Only on already cleared land, if it doesn't impact environmental value**

---

**Need to respect carrying capacity and not occur if there clearing is necessary**

---

**Set limits on animals per hectare.**

---

**Where is the "not at all" option**

---

---

Should only be permitted in low numbers

---

Grazing could occur within both the E3 and E4 zone because of the stocking rate calculations (DSE/ha) used within the industry.

---

A dairy (pasture-based) where the animals generally feed by grazing on living grasses and other plants

---

Produce to be valued added for sale to tourists.

---

Regenerative methods only

---

Animals need to eat more grass than grains to assist sustainable and produce a healthy digestible product for humans

---

Well away from riparian zones

---

Area size limited for grazing

---

Again not benefiting public

---

This should not happen on protected lands and no clearing should be allowed except under strict conditions.

---

Suspect that stocking densities and waste generated make dairying unsuitable for environmentally sensitive areas

---

Not appropriate

---

Non-commercial dairy that limits head per hectare. This may complement a tourism operations.

---

Existing pastures. No deforestation.

---

Should not be permitted

---

Dairy operations could occur within both the E3 and E4 zone because of the stocking rate calculations (DSE/ha) used within the industry.

---

## Bee keeping

---

Local native bees.

---

E2 for motive bee-keeping; E3 for European bees

---

Yes! Beekeepers are important and assist pollination. As long as bee populations are increasing and beekeepers are required to responsibly manage hives this is good. Place a priority on increasing native bee numbers too

---

Limit on No. hives

---

Properly trained bee keepers only to avoid spread of disease

---

Bees are extremely important to sustain bush and developed areas

---

Practice minimising of swarming into tree hollows

---

Signage

---

Bee Keeping should be allowed in certain bushland areas under strict environment conditions and not on a major scale. All regulations regarding the protection of bee health should be monitored by authorities.

---

I assume this is referring to commercial bee-keeping? Could also be allowed in E2, where it doesn't impact on the natural environment.

---

---

**Allow in all 3 zones**

---

**Licensed, to restrict access to designated areas.**

---

**Should only be permitted for Australian native bees, exotic bees to be excluded**

---

**Bee keeping could occur in all environment zones because it can be a low intensity and bees are integral to pollination of flora.**

---

## **Mining**

---

**shouldn't be allowed**

---

**Mine Mine Mine.**

---

**Should be prohibited in any zone with environmental values**

---

**Underground mining only**

---

**Sadly, mining companies have failed miserably at environmental management so we can't leave that responsibility to them. They have a conflict of interest due to commercial factors**

---

**Do not allow any fracking , gas exploration or exploration or coal mining**

---

**Mining should be able to operate without stifling conditions enforced by blithering minority groups. Over the years the mines here and in other areas have reconstructed the areas mined to better than before they were mined. They are careful of their procedures to be mindful of the environment and are an enormous employer of persons in this area. Keep the troublemakers out , give the horse stud owners less say in what the mines should do and our area and others**

---

**Unless already established, mining should not be permitted**

---

**no mining**

---

**Underground only**

---

**As offset activity only to repair/improve previously mined landscapes only in order to improve district ecology**

---

**No mining in any of these zones.**

---

**NO further mining, open cut or otherwise should EVER be allowed to happen in the Hunter Valley as it has already been damaged beyond any restoration. It is not possible to repair water tables or return the earth to what it was. Seeing the Hunter Valley from the air looks like the Earth has cancer.**

---

**Not suitable for any area requiring environmental protection.**

---

**No mining at clearly**

---

**Not appropriate**

---

**None**

---

**None**

---

**Reduce the amount of mining in Cessnock. Protect the environment.**

---

**Don't allow at all**

---

**It's on its way out why not start to adjust?**

---

**Not at all**

---

**Needs to be wound down so that more environmentally sound energy producing practices can increase**

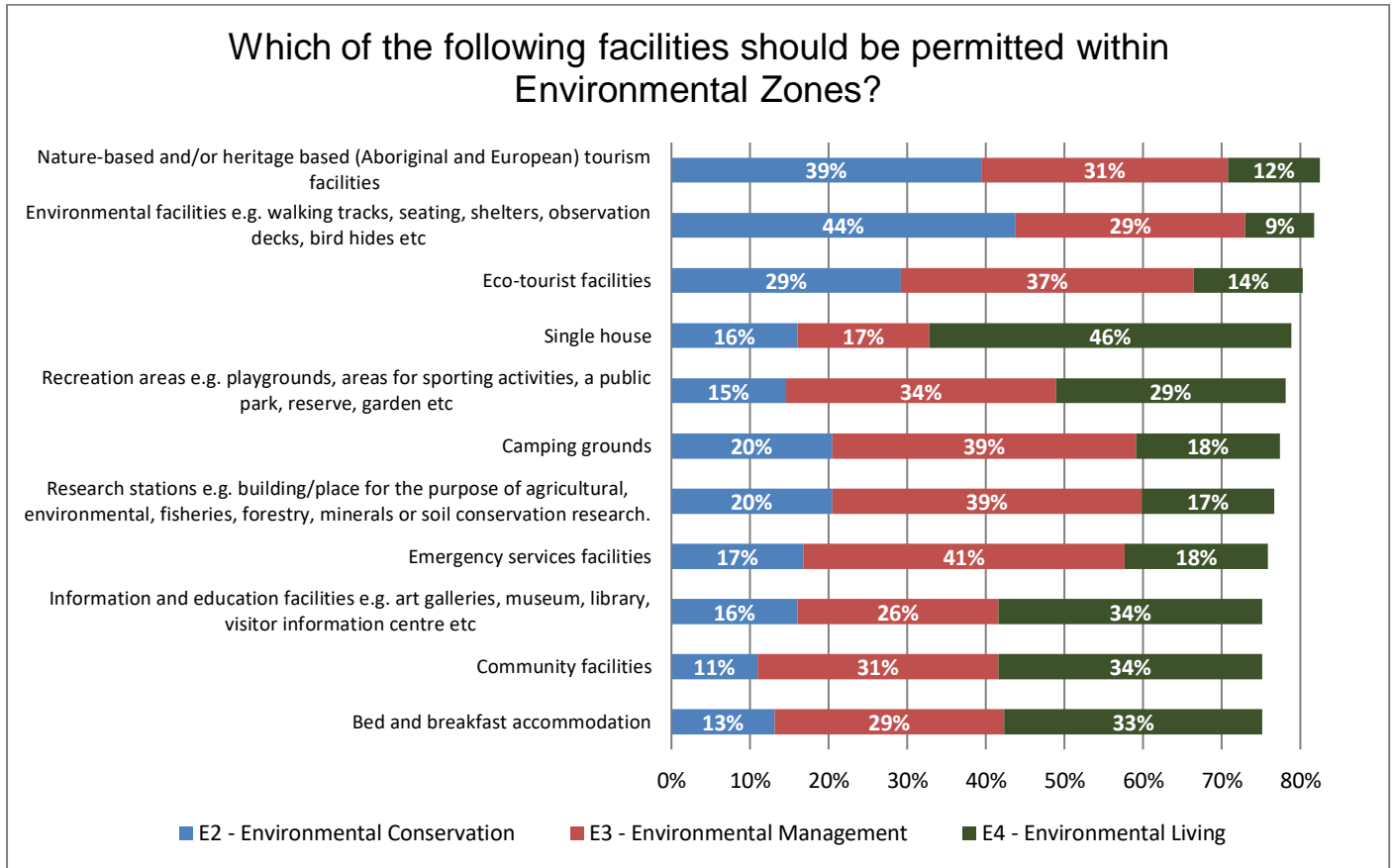
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**Mining is impacting the health of so many rural communities. Supporting industries that could replace mining is a priority.**

**Mining is not compatible within any environmental zones**

**None.**

**Q6: Which of the following facilities should be permitted within Environmental Zones?**



Please specify any conditions:

**Nature-based and/or heritage based (Aboriginal and European) tourism facilities**

**Consultation with indigenous groups**

**Make it an even balance. Not top heavy with aboriginal culture**

**no vehicular access**

**If numbers can be effectively limited**

**If the purpose of the facility is to showcase the natural environment and educate visitors then it should be allows in each of the zones**

**Enforcement of rules/ regulations**

**Very small groups only. Harsh penalties for destruction or polluting the environment**

**This should be included in all zones.**

## Single house

---

Facilities for native rangers.

---

Again, why can I only tick one zone

---

Land to be used sensibly and any house built to be sympathetic with its surrounds

---

Housing should meet Greenstar/passive house/ bushfire standards

---

Only if lagoon a community assess maintained

---

subject to strict conditions preventing adverse impact to the area

---

Cessnock Council has no visible guidelines that would enable them to grant permission for Eco Tourism

---

Could also be allowed in E2, if there was a suitable location on already cleared land

---

Needs to have minimal impact on native veg, for examine, the extent of clearing for infrastructure and fire protection plus the house should not exceed 1500sqm

---

E3 and E4

---

## Bed and breakfast accommodation

---

Nil

---

no shouldn't be allowed shouldn't be allowed

---

No

---

These activities require a complete overhaul of permission regulations especially if they are in Historic, Rural or Bushland areas, The above two comments

---

## Camping grounds

---

Nil

---

Allow campers to bring dogs under conditions followed by caravan parks. i.e. on a lead and supervised at all times

---

If proper Facilities available and numbers can be controlled

---

No

---

subject to strict conditions

---

The above two comments also apply to the question of Camping Areas

---

In the right location - we have them in E1 zones i.e. National Parks, but would have to be in suitable location and restricted numbers to avoid damaging the environment.

---

Where impact is minimal and access to and from the camp ground is good.

---

All E zones.

---

## Emergency services facilities

---

Fire trails and emergency vehicle assess.

---

Anywhere as required

---

Activity is complimentary to conservation objectives

---

After watching the construction of a Fire shed some years ago on an Aboriginal Sacred Site with a view of Yengo, I have absolutely no faith in any Council's ability to make a decision on such matters without consultation with stakeholders like Native Title Holders and Aboriginal peopleTjese

---

On already cleared land

---

Don't allow

---

All E zones.

---

## Environmental facilities e.g. walking tracks, seating, shelters, observation decks, bird hides etc.

---

Activities must be supervised and controlled.

---

no vehicular access

---

If numbers can be controlled and there is local emergency capability

---

Perfect

---

These approvals require the same level of attention to detail as the previous comments and full consultation with stakeholders. As noted above

---

Need to be sensitively done, so as not to scare away the wildlife that people come to see - more likely to have range of plants/animals/birds in E2.

---

Allow in all zones

---

In order to restrict access to sensitive areas

---

Things along the creeks in local parks/lakes (e.g. the lake in Greta) that encourage visitation such as picnic tables, walking trails.

---

All E zones

---

## Eco-tourist facilities

---

Only if controlled by native title guidelines.

---

If activities complimentary to conservation objectives, numbers can be controlled and there is sufficient local emergency mgmt. capability

---

Yes

---

As noted above, Council needs to find out exactly what Eco tourism permits require and stick to the rules Same as above

---

Education on human impact

---

All zones, subject to bulk and scale controls

---

**Recreation areas e.g. playgrounds, areas for sporting activities, a public park, reserve, garden etc.**

Revegetation of degraded areas to be priority. Areas to be strictly defined.

Consult with children

A balanced selection would be best serving to visitors and residents alike

Yes

As above - community consultation is imperative

These are suburban facilities, but an area of E4 zoned residences should still have access to a public park, but not necessarily sporting fields.

Between e3 e4. Embrace the environment, don't destroy everything just to build a park

enable access to creek banks to explore the area

All zones, subject to bulk and scale controls

### **Community facilities**

For education of travellers to the area.

Small scale rural based community facilities

Consider in planning areas in which persons towing a caravan can easily park and easily access facilities

Complimentary to or no effect on the species being managed

Once again, it doesn't matter what intrudes on the natural environment, Council has to get it right and consult with the Community

Anywhere that there is tourist activity, there needs to be public toilets, sensibly sited to avoid environmental impact.

information on different species that live in environmental areas

All zones, subject to bulk and scale controls

**Information and education facilities e.g. art galleries, museum, library, visitor information centre etc.**

For purpose of imparting historical knowledge.

Again easy parking for persons towing caravans and clear directions approaching the town as to where these facilities can be found. It is not sensible to have to reach town centre to find where you need to go.

Economically complimentary (i.e. integrated with) to or no effect on the species being managed

Must be non-invasive - blends in with the area

Consultation, consultation, consultation with the community and obey the building guides

Visitor information centre for tourists, as you have in National Parks, but sized according to the attraction.

None

More visitor information in regional centres



---

Subject to bulk and scale controls

---

Research stations e.g. building/place for the purpose of agricultural, environmental, fisheries, forestry, minerals or soil conservation research.

---

Conservation must be the primary purpose of all activities.

---

Activities not directed by big ag/mining companies

---

Equal attention should be given to all of the above examples .Not heavily leaning toward conservation to the detriment of agricultural as a case in question

---

Complimentary to or minimum effect on the species being managed

---

As with fire sheds, etc. Consultation with the experts, Land Services, etc., Native Title holders, Aboriginal groups and the COMMUNITY

---

By and large, these should be on rural land, not environmental land, with the possible exception of an environmental research station.

---

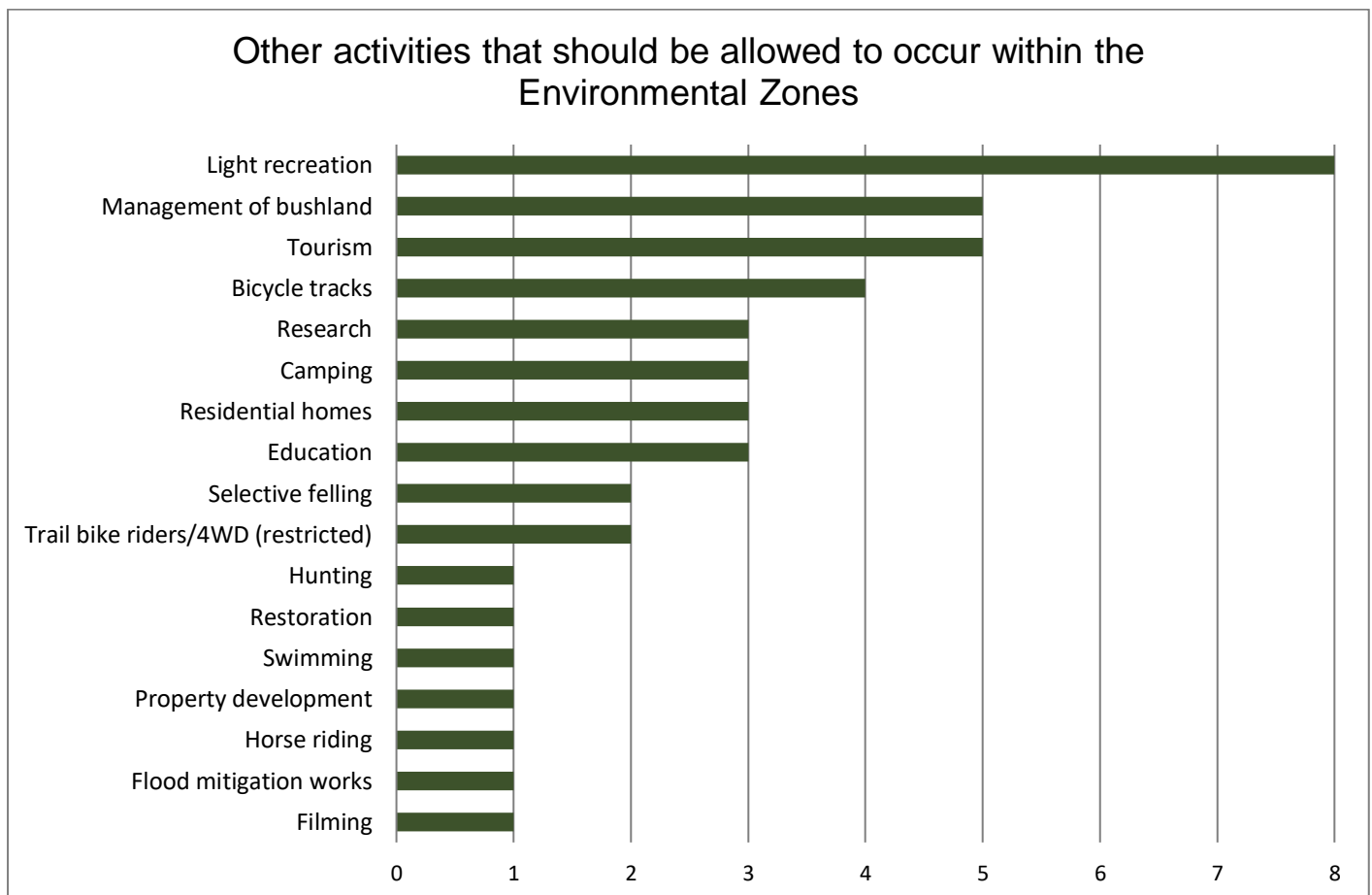
As for dwellings, extent of veg clearing should be limited to 1500sqm

---

Involve government bodies to care for the creek banks in local parks.

---

**Q7: Please list any other activities that should be allowed to occur within the Environmental Zones and explain why.**



**Verbatim comments:**

---

**Recreation and research for the benefit of biodiversity**

---

**Recreational hunting. To control animals and maintain a stable ratio within the environment**

---

**Activities to restore the environment to its original state.**

---

**Deforestation is a cause of climate change.**

---

**The state is natural bush is for the most part a tragedy. The bush in its current state full of small sickly trees and shrubs that will never reach their potential is not how indigenous people managed this area. It is the result of neglect and a failure to properly husband the environment. Proper husbandry clearing should be allowed and encouraged and the land we have should be allowed to be productive and able to support native species as fully as possible.**

---

**none**

---

**Swimming or pontoon with s slide if safe to do so**

---

**hiking/camping**

---

**We need more development.**

---

**Eco tourist facilities**

---

**Boutique breweries and other small scale tourist facilities**

---

**Selective felling of useful timber**

---

**Aboriginal based fire management**

---

**Nature photography tours- contributes to reverence for nature**

---

**Residential home**

---

**Bush preschools, open classrooms, to extend children's knowledge and encourage advocacy.**

---

**All groups need to be consulted and views considered**

---

**Research to enable further understanding, monitoring and protection of our environment**

---

**Trail bike riders. Not unlicensed persons only the persons who are licenced, registered and insured and ride sensibly not tearing the landscape apart. For example, groups from local motor bike clubs in the area.**

---

**Scientific research to help with biodiversity maintenance**

---

**Free camping, no power, water or amenities provided. To teach people to care for environment and to learn about living off grid**

---

**n/a**

---

**Anything that minimises harm and promotes understanding of the natural environment should be allowed**

---

**Mountain bike and horse riding , hiking , camping , bird watching**

---

**walking tours for school children, to encourage a love and appreciation for the natural environment**

---

**Properly funded cool burning by qualified and authorised indigenous custodians**

---

**Tourism activities to promote the uniqueness of our region**

Light recreation, walking bike tracks.

Activities that allow interaction within the environmental zones with minimal impact. E.g. hiking, cycling etc.

Doesn't matter what activity planned /wanted in environmental lands, the Council **MUST CONSULT** all the Stakeholders, especially our First People and the Community

All privately owned blocks of land should get a dwelling permit so owners can build a house

No activity should be allowed that is detrimental to the local environment

N/A

Walking, hiking. Must be a way for the public to enjoy the environment

Filming. This would be a low impact activity that could generate revenue and provide tourism benefits

Mountain bikes, 4WD, Motorbikes. Only if monitoring and limited access can be adhered to. Education is key as the minority of irresponsible people can, and have done much damage in overseas areas.

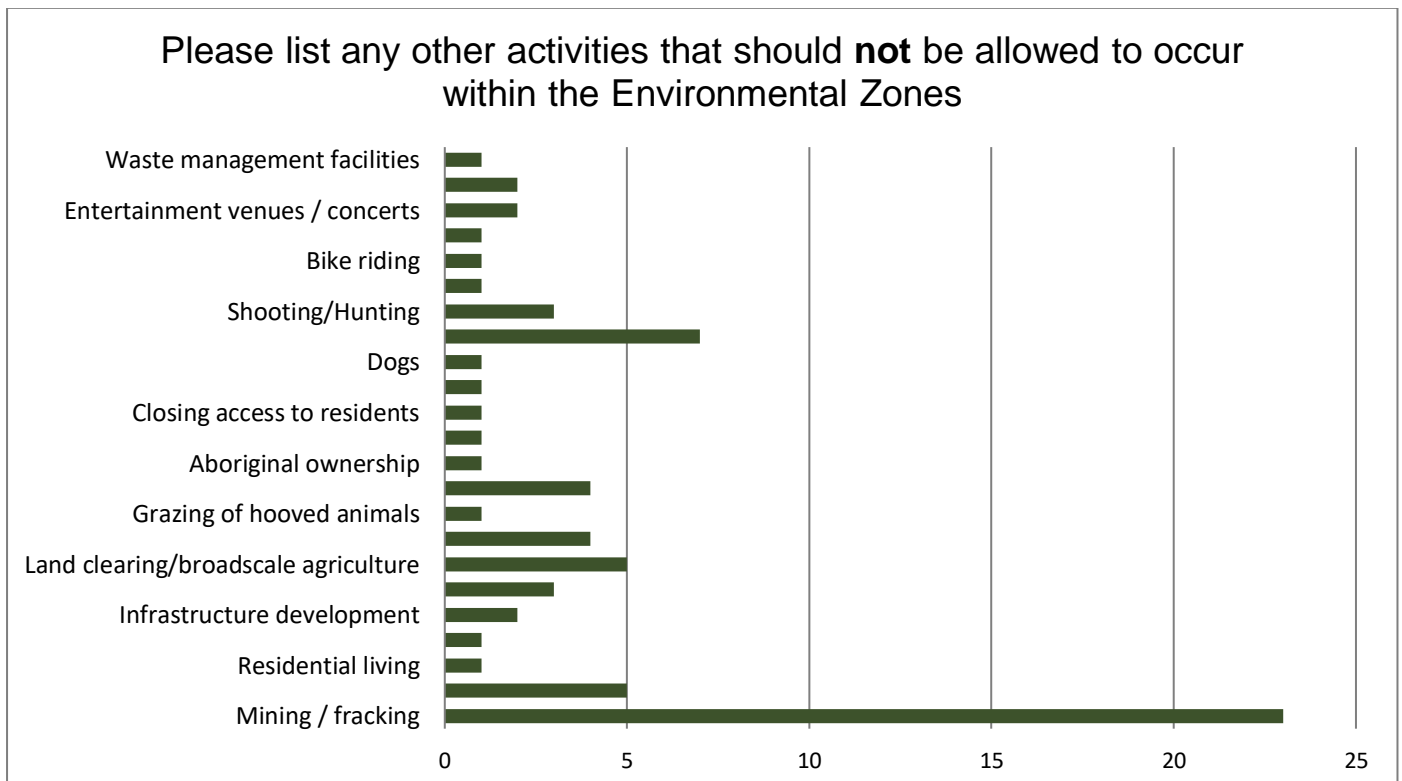
Exploration , interaction , nature study

Low impact natural, cultural & educational activities using a holistic approach.

Ecotourism activities

Flood mitigation works, environmental protection works, bed and breakfast, eco-tourism activities, dwellings,

**Q8: Please list any other activities that should not be allowed to occur within the Environmental Zones and explain why.**



**Verbatim comments:**

---

**Residential or industrial developments. To protect the natural environment**

---

**Too much destruction of the natural ecosystem as it would diminish the purpose of environmental zones.**

---

**Housing development, mining, infrastructure development.**

---

**Reason  
It's obvious**

---

**Agricultural land clearing and mining.**

---

**Locals have no input as to extent and only undertaken for a commercial purpose.**

---

**Mining. Large housing development.**

---

**no camping no dogs**

---

**aboriginal ownership**

---

**Closing off access to residents**

---

**Mining**

---

**Broad scale agriculture**

---

**Any activity that requires extensive clearing of native vegetation**

---

**moron on motor bikes**

---

**Recreational driving/motorbike riding - pollutant run off in sensitive areas, noise disturbing wildlife and quieter visitors.**

---

**Mining and detrimental agricultural practices. How many times does it need to be said!**

---

**Mining**

---

**Stop clearing land for houses**

---

**Commercial business**

---

**Mining, destruction of any cultural artefacts**

---

**Destruction should not be allowed**

---

**Residential living**

---

**Gas fracking - potentially harmful to the local environment**

---

**Hunting - other than removal of feral/introduced species**

---

**All mining -destroys environment and impacts on wine/tourism**

---

**Mining should not be allowed as it will destroy the environmental nature of these zones**

---

**Absolutely no shooting of any kind , but that really goes without saying**

---

**Horse and bike riding**

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**Motorbike riding. Digs up the ground**

---

**mining of any form / coal seam gas / damage to the water table / dams**

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---

**Any activity that threatens what we have left in terms of biodiversity.**

---

**Any grazing of hoofed animals which damages the top soil and its carbon and water holding abilities.**

---

**mining**

---

**Cars should be prevented from some places to prevent dumping.**

---

**Mining will destroy the natural areas.**

---

**Gas or minerals exploration, new roads, commercial enterprises should NOT BE PERMITTED, because they devalue nature gradually and eat away at conservation value.**

---

**Off track motorbikes**

---

**No mining should be allowed in ANY environmental zone in CCC.**

---

**Dirt bike riding**

---

**We shouldn't have entertainment venues in our regional areas as the extra burden to the environment and native animals is too drastic.**

---

**hunting other than for management of feral pests**

---

**mining , no more tourism**

---

**Activities that have a negative impact on native animals. Negative impact on the land maybe acceptable provided it can be returned to as good or better state provided it does not have a negative impact on fauna.**

---

**as above common sense**

---

**mining**

---

**Waste management facilities - risk of leachate escaping as liners break down/fail, plus putrescible waste attracts non-native animals e.g. rats, cats etc.**

---

**Motor bike track and off road driving. Garbage dumping etc. should be monitored garbage removed and efforts made to identify culprits**

---

**Over development**

---

**Large developments**

---

**Mining, as too destructive to environment.**

---

**Dense property / suburb development.**

---

**Motor bikes, four wheel drives unless they are confined to marked tracks**

---

**Mining, destruction, land clearing.**

---

**Forestry**

---

**Anything that puts our shrinking biodiversity at risk**

---

**Motorbikes, 4WD, dumping rubbish**

---

**Mining, for obvious reasons.**

---

**Loud concerts, things that could impact the local wildlife /littering**

---

**Mining and any other industry which is incompatible within any environmental zone. E.g. Open cut mining is totally destructive and effects the local population health and wellbeing.**

---

---

Housing developments or mining

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Mining, tourist and visitor accommodation, commercial premises. The land use table should be a closed zone, e.g. Prohibited - ... Any other development not specified in item 2 or 3

---

**Q 9: Is there anything else we should consider?**

---

Tracks and trails for safe bush walking, horse riding and motor bike riding.

---

Feral predators and weeds

---

Australian governments should be guided by local concerns. Consultation is NOT telling us what is going to happen.

---

Go for a walk in the bush. Think how you would possibly catch food or live as First Nations people did. Impossible. Read the accounts of first settlers to understand what our bush should and can look like. Substantial trees 30m apart. Native grasslands. Diversity. Don't equate neglect with conservation. The bush needs to be managed. That's what happened before Europeans arrived. It's what we need to do again.

---

we should look after Pokolbin state forest

---

Why should I pay rates for ideological fantasy

---

finding way to exclude all motor bikes

---

Encouraging regenerative agricultural activity to improve moisture holding and carbon storage capacity of soils. Local soils are stripped and hydrophobic right up to sensitive environmental zones. They will be more resilient to climate change after regeneration.

---

I only found out about the Greta Hunter river walk recently. Why did it take 'Retrotrail' for me to find out about this? Where the nature are walks in the Cessnock area. Why don't I know about them? Where can I go to sit by the river and connect with nature? I don't know. Why don't I know? The key is getting people to engage with the environment in a healthy and respectful way. Once you have this- the community will get on your side.

---

Stop wasting people's time with surveys about environment and do your bloody job! Fix the roads and cooper street for a start. Cessnock is going backwards thanks to Cessnock city council you are a disgrace

---

Local character, historical local use of area or lands i.e. if it was a fishing spot and has been for 50yrs this should be a serious consideration

---

Don't waste vast quantities of funds on various studies as was done about the bats recently. Just decide and get on with it.

---

Safety

---

disabled access

---

Please keep in new housing development natural habitat stop allowing all trees to be cleared

---

more rangers to protect common land

---

Land clearing should be minimised in Environmental Zones.

---

Encourage recreational activities that don't impact nature.

---

Eco cabins should be allows on rural properties alongside single dwelling so friends and family can stay.

---

combining some environmental and recreation activities e.g. a walk or cycle through wetlands to encourage fitness and a love of the environment

---

---

**Encouraging activities that promote everyone's responsibility to the local environment and offer solutions to make it happen**

---

**a limit on the amount of bed and breakfasts, a stop to selling rural land where sheds are being built and lived in particularly in flood prone areas, oversight of the subdivision of rural blocks being developed for tourist activities**

---

**Common-sense, ethics, climate change, our children and their children, OUR CONSCIENCE, and the COMMUNITY.**

---

**Zones apply to whole blocks, yet sometimes the environmental attributes are not spread over the entire block. The zoning then prevents some activities which may be appropriate in part of the block e.g. grazing on already cleared land. The zoning seems a blunt instrument.**

**I didn't see any mention of horse riding or grazing - these are still pretty common activities in the Cessnock LGA. No problem with grazing on already cleared land and riding on already made tracks, but open to expert advice.**

---

**Unregistered motor bike riding in the Bush**

---

**As above**

---

**Things need flexibility and an open minded approach, just not overdone.**

---

**Don't over populate / urbanise. Consider community recreational facilities, parks, golf courses, hiking tracks.**

---

**As the environment needs help, why not become a leader. Embrace and market a unique approach that will enhance the region and provide long- lasting employment and innovation.**

---

**Don't look at the \$\$\$ first.**

---

**Protection of the scenic landscape of the-region. This contributes to social wellbeing and the local economy**

---

**Development of walking trails /mountain bike activities**

---

**How can we add weight to environmental zones for cultural and aesthetic values?**

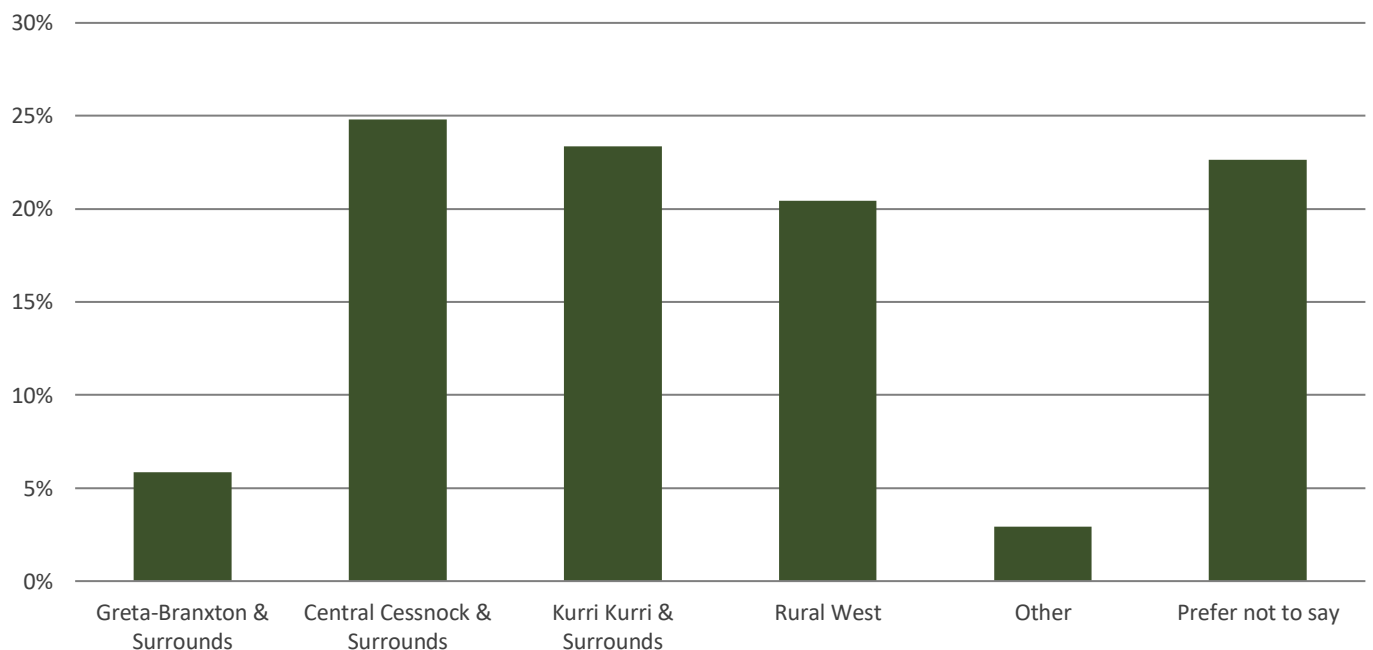
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**Q10: What suburb do you live in?\***

Suburb	No. of responses
Aberdare	3
Abermain	3
Bellbird	1
Bellbird Heights	2
Branxton	3
Brunkerville	2
Buchanan	1
Buttai	1
Cedar Creek	1
Cessnock	13
Cliftleigh	1
Congewai	2
Ellalong	10
Elrington	3
Greta	3
Heddon Greta	3
Kearsley	3
Keinbah	2

Suburb	No. of responses
Kurri Kurri	3
Laguna	2
Lochinvar	2
Lovedale	2
Millfield	4
Mount Vincent	7
Mulbring	1
North Rothbury	2
Nulkaba	1
Other (please specify)*	4
Paxton	4
Pelaw Main	1
Pokolbin	4
Quorrobolong	4
Rothbury	1
Sawyers Gully	1
Weston	4
Wollombi	2

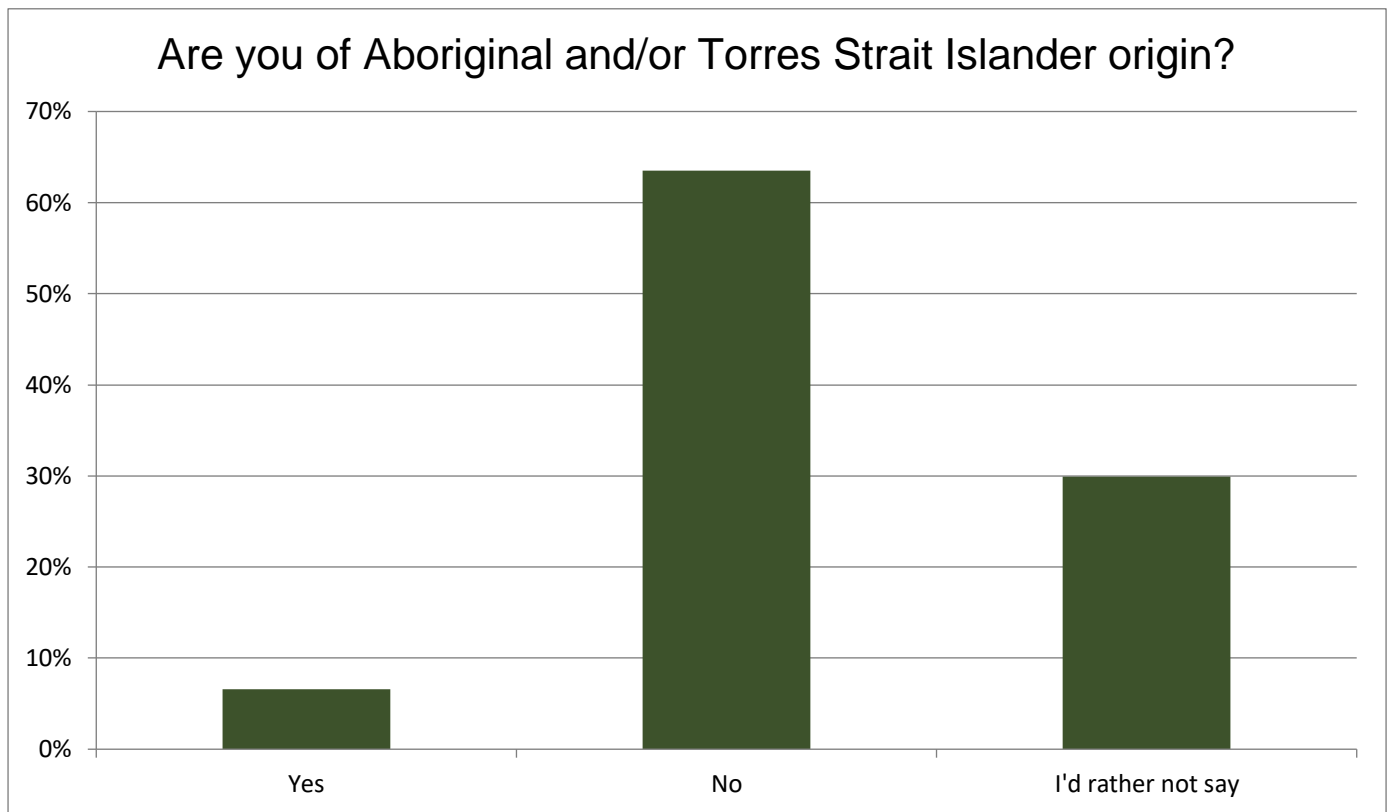
**Response by Planning Area**



\*Other: Cameron Park, Ashtonfield, Fishing Point.



**Q11: Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin?**



**Q12: What is your age?**

