



WILDFLOWER SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA (Inc)

14 April 2021

City of Kalamunda

[Engage.kalamunda.wa.gov.au/lbs-2020-2030](https://engage.kalamunda.wa.gov.au/lbs-2020-2030)

To whom it may concern

KALAMUNDA LOCAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

The Wildflower Society of WA (WSWA) makes this submission on the City of Kalamunda's Draft Local Biodiversity Strategy 2020-2030.

Overall, the WSWA welcomes the biodiversity strategy work being done in Local Government. However, this policy document is highly disappointing in the context of the value of Kalamunda's very high biodiversity values and needs additional work.

Our specific comments are made in the following sections and have been informed through feedback from several of our members and associates who reside in the City of Kalamunda.

Previous history

The then Shire of Kalamunda approved and endorsed the 1995 District Conservation Strategy Policy and the 1998 Wildlife Corridor Strategy Policy with full council support. These Policies were prepared following more than four year's engagement with 100 Shire residents and also the State's top scientists and planners. The Shire prepared updated draft strategies in 1999 and sent letters to ratepayers encouraging good behaviour next to corridors in 2000. These Policies made the City of Kalamunda a leader in environmental policy, local government biodiversity strategy and public engagement, and was well documented inside and outside of council. Consequently, the Shire of Kalamunda won a John Tonkin Greening Award in 1996/7 for this work.

This work was copied by other local governments and used for instance by the Shire of Mundaring in extending the wildlife corridors across the Perth Hills.

This initiative was followed by the first Local Biodiversity Strategy in 2008.

Current Situation

The City of Kalamunda itself acknowledges that the 2008 Local Biodiversity Strategy was not used effectively to support land use planning decisions or to increase the protection status of identified significant natural areas in the City. Given this stated failure in the use of the 2008 Strategy, it will be incumbent on City of Kalamunda



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staff and Councillors to ensure those shortcomings are not repeated. The City needs to again support its District Conservation Strategy and the Wildlife Corridor Strategy policies.

The City of Kalamunda is very reliant on its Friends Groups volunteers to maintain pockets of existing bushland, but their manual labour and time is limited. The lack of knowledge of sources of information, or of current information, on flora and fauna hinder the efforts of volunteers and City staff who are relying instead on inadequate data. Current activities and outcomes regarding these globally important biodiversity values need to have the tools and support to match earlier achievements.

The Biodiversity Strategy

The WSWA supports the concept of a Biodiversity Strategy and is pleased the City of Kalamunda has started the re-initiated process and reviewed its earlier Strategy. However, the current draft document is not easy to understand. It is not presented in a way that recognises the very good work carried out in support of the 1995 DCS District Conservation Strategy Policy and the 1998 Wildlife Corridor Strategy Policy. The major strategies and recommendations of these Policies also need to be included in the new draft Biodiversity Strategy.

The figures and the GIS are very difficult to use. The simple figures of the Shire of Kalamunda's earlier reserve management reports were much easier to use, although GIS is invaluable for analysis and is an excellent and necessary facility, the simplified presentation will aid volunteers and community members in their work to support the strategy.

This draft biodiversity document also shows that the City of Kalamunda doesn't currently know that the biodiversity is well documented and the potential there is to do great damage to existing healthy flora and fauna populations.

However, there is recognition in the draft Biodiversity Strategy of the increasing evidence of higher restorative benefits to human health and wellbeing of remnant native bushland, even if it is in less than pristine condition. This aspect of native vegetation, as well as the value of the other ecosystem services that native vegetation provides, needs to be more strongly emphasised, celebrated and protected.

Biodiversity Strategy actions required

Former EPA head Dr Barry Carbon simplified the principles of environmental protection into Conservation through Reserves, Management planning, Wise use of resources and the Protection of People. This is also a core model of what is needed in this draft Biodiversity Strategy to protect and maintain our Planet and Biodiversity life support systems.



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The biodiversity policies of the State, proposals for new National and Regional Parks, and policies for protection of Bush Forever sites, wetland and waterway conservation and Greenways need to be implemented. If they are not implemented, we all lose and biodiversity loses, and we lose our legacy.

The destruction of WA's Southwest biodiversity hotspot, of Kalamunda's conservation reserves, biodiversity, ecosystem and the impact of this destruction of wildlife corridor vegetation, fauna and beauty is not good for local residents, let alone for other residents of the state.

Therefore, the WSWA supports the establishment of cross-Kalamunda National Parks and Regional Parks, including the placement of stream wildlife corridors into larger state managed A class reserves. This means the full implementation and expansion of the Darling Range Regional Park as declared by the then Premier in the late 1990s. The WSWA strongly recommends that the City of Kalamunda re-start and engage staff to properly implement the Wildlife Corridor GIS Based Conservation Reserve System work and improve the quality of this work.

Bird nesting areas, such as those in Quenda Creek and the Gooseberry Hill regional open space, need to be incorporated into the Gooseberry Hill National Park. The Maida Vale Reserve supports nesting of listed migratory birds, so the Reserve's management needs to be undertaken under the umbrella of an A class conservation reserve vesting.

The WSWA strongly recommends that the Biodiversity Strategy utilises and supports the conservation of the Threatened Ecological Communities and Declared Rare and Priority Flora east of the Swan Canning Estuary, and in particular in Kalamunda, that is underpinned by the Swan Coastal Plain floristic communities work.

The construction of Aged Care developments in remnant bushland, which will destroy the most valuable conservation corridor lands in the City of Kalamunda, must stop. Existing cleared and urbanised lands elsewhere need to be used instead. This practice is not discussed in the draft Biodiversity Strategy as a threatening process.

The coordinated management of weeds needs to be a program supported by all of the City of Kalamunda's departments and undertaken over 3-5 years. Spraying for one year is not effective, is expensive and requires too much herbicide. Co-ordination of weed spraying across the City of Kalamunda's business and operations was implemented following the implementation of the 1995 District Conservation Strategy Policy, but has lapsed. It needs to be re-introduced.

The WSWA recommends that tree lopping of hollow trees containing bat colonies should be less enthusiastic.



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Other issues that the WSWA would like to see addressed, or more strongly addressed, in the Biodiversity Strategy to increase protection and management of natural areas include the following:

- the status of natural areas within the City
- the viability and resilience of natural areas with buffers and ecological linkages
- long term community engagement in biodiversity management
- recognition and preservation of natural bush areas
- retention of natural vegetation by private landholders
- restoration of degraded remnant native vegetation
- use of local provenance plants for planting, climate-change modified
- Phytophthora dieback precautions and treatment
- Myrtle Rust monitoring, identification, reporting, removal, treatment and eradication. Myrtle Rust is not listed as a threat, but it is a serious threat
- feral woody weeds control
- roadworks such as road widening for purported safety reasons
- prescribed burning for fire management and the devastating impact that poorly formulated targets and practices have on both flora and fauna biodiversity. Note that the WSWA has recently prepared a soon to be approved Position Statement on Prescribed Burning that the City of Kalamunda can obtain on request.

Final comments and conclusion

The draft Biodiversity Strategy states that the City of Kalamunda wants to implement least cost opportunities for improving the protection status and condition of local natural areas. This is not an acceptable position. Our biodiversity is irreplaceable and immensely valuable. If our native vegetation is worth protecting, it is worth spending money protecting and restoring it. One would hardly imagine the French people not spending millions of Euros protecting and now restoring one of their greatest assets, Notre Dame Cathedral. Our forests and other natural areas are our cathedral. We should be spending likewise to preserve and restore them.

Many of the recommendations and proposed actions in the draft Biodiversity Strategy are commendable. We encourage the City to undertake what is recommended and proposed.

Yours faithfully,



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