Evaluation PIA Planet Training Session
Biodiversity & Urban Planning
19 May 2020

LOCI
Environment
& Place

Event: PIA (Vic) Planet Course: Biodiversity and Urban Planning

Venue: Online Seminar

17 people attended the seminar. 16 evaluation forms were received and summarised below. 95% response rate.

The session was facilitated by Sheridan Blunt from Loci Environment & Place with sessions run by Melbourne-based biodiversity planning specialists, Dr Melanie Birtchnell and Liz Drury.

Please note, these first 6 question were from 8 attendees only.

1. **Out of 5, how satisfied were participants with this seminar?**   **Average 4.1**
2. **Out of 5, how likely were participants to recommend this seminar?**   **Average 3.8**
3. **Out of 5, how well did participants feel the learning objectives were met?**   **Average 3.9**
4. **Out of 5, how satisifed were participants that they had enough time?**   **Average 3.4**
5. **Out of 5, how well did participants feel that discussion was encouraged?**   **Average 4.4**
6. **Out of 5, how knowledgable did participants feel the facilitators were?**   **Average 4.4**

Loci Response: these scores are high however were slightly better last year. This may be because the session was run virtually due to COVID19 pandemic or may reflect that the group's starting knowledge base was higher than last year.

7. **What were the most valuable parts of today's seminar for you?**

	Ticked by
Improving general understanding of biodiversity in Victoria	**56%**
Overview of regulations Federal: EPBC Act State: FFG Act	**50%**
Overview of planning scheme overlays	**63%**
Overview of cl52.17 and 52.16	**56%**
Overview of tree measurements and TPZs	**25%**
Learning from fellow participants & understanding where other organisations are at with their biodiversity planning	**56%**
Overview of construction management to protect biodiversity	**25%**
General opportunity for questions & feedback with specialists	**37%**

Background of attendees*	No.
Strategic Urban Planning	**7**
Statutory Urban Planning	**7**
Environmental Planning	**4**
Conservation	**1**
Ecology/Biodiversity	**1**
Arborist	**3**
Horticulturalist	**1**
Urban Designer	**1**
Landscape Architect	**1**
Earth Resources	**1**

*attendees were able to select multiple disciplines

Loci Response: The spread of interest areas is high with a preference for the planning scheme content (as expected for a PIA session). The score of 56% for learning from fellow participants is very high and perhaps reflects a willingness for practitioners to join together on their challenges.

8. **What changes do you think the session will generate for you?** % of attendees that ticked option. Multiple options could be ticked.

	Ticked by
Information/momentum to better apply existing planning controls eg front counter checklists, revised standard conditions, training etc	**31%**
Information/momentum to pursue new planning controls eg overlays, local planning policies	**44%**
Information/momentum to pursue different biodiversity initiatives eg local mapping, revegetation works, education, engagement, enforcement, monitoring	**44%**
No changes yet, as I still feel like I need more information and training	**6%**
No changes needed.	**6%**

Loci Response: The data shows there is momentum for a range of different follow up actions. Loci is pleased that over 30% are happy to undertake initiatives that help the existing controls work better.

9. **What did you like about the session? What could we improve on?**
   (these are direct quotes from participants however they have been clustered by Loci)

The information was delivered well considering the changes from classroom to virtual training.

The presenters were knowledgeable and engaging.

Very broad, but related topics.

As an Arborist, who has recently become an Environmental Planner, it was very informative. Thank you.

More examples will be very helpful to future participants.

Really enjoyed all of the aspects. Would love to hear more practical examples and case studies of how different LGAs are implementing their PS regarding fauna/habitat.

Great overview. As a planner, I would like to deliver a little deeper into other council's experiences – success and problems – with the application of planning controls/overlays.

It would be good if the course intro notes could include detail on what level of experience/expertise it is pitched at. I've attended at least one course where I though, I know this already. I have about 30+ years in the professions.

There should be better time management and sufficient time to go over the materials.

More detailed discussions about possible uses for VPO/ESO/SLO though that may be better covered in a separate course. One course per control would be beneficial so we can go into more detail.

Two half day sessions instead of a full day. Run closer to time on agenda or remove 1-2 topics to finite in so it's not rushed and break aren't shortened.

Livestream seemed to be more focused on listening and discussion than what face to face sessions typically are.

I thought it was a good session, however as it was a Zoom meeting I felt that the interactions are not as good as a face to face

Information delivered into my own home and comfort zone.

Some technical issues made it difficult to communicate, but overall, I enjoyed the information delivered without having to travel into the city to attend.

Accessible to many people.

Maybe include in the prep notes whether the presenters expect participants to have their videos on or not. That made it more 'real'. Also would be good to have the opportunity for participants to casually chat during the breaks, as they would in a traditional learning session.

Loci Response: This feedback reflects that the attendees really enjoyed the course. There were requests for more examples which we can address next time we run the course.

Most of the suggestions for improvements were due to the time restrictions and wanting more content & discussion. This was our first virtual meeting and we were unsure how the timing would work.

Biodiversity Planning in Victoria

19 May 2020 – Planning Institute of Australia Planet Training Session

This course is designed for anyone wanting an overview of biodiversity planning requirements in Victoria. It covers the relevant requirements within planning schemes and introduces important strategic concepts and processes for protecting our flora and fauna.

The course provides a summary of issues and opportunities that can be applied to better protect our valued biodiversity. This course is structured to provide a brief overview of issues and is complementary to the annual detailed three-day training course run in conjunction with LGPro's Biodiversity Planners Network.

The overall objective of the course is to develop consistent approaches to statutory planning for biodiversity, so the more diverse our audience, the better.

Learning Outcomes

o   Overview of the significance of biodiversity for Victoria and beyond.

o   Understand the role, processes and strategic planning considerations for remnant and indigenous vegetation in greenfields and suburban development

o   Understand the range of Federal and State legislative requirements that need to be applied for biodiversity protection.

o   Consider the opportunities for applying supporting local planning policies, overlays, cl52.17 provisions and monitoring.

o   Learn where you can access more detailed training services if needed.

Dr Melanie Birtchnell

Melanie has enjoyed almost two decades in the field of ecology and biodiversity planning. She has extensive experience in ecological consulting, research and education, and is a recognized leader in biodiversity planning. She has worked with a diverse range of clients and has worked in State and Local governments.

Mel's passion lies in sharing knowledge and advocating for biodiversity and empowering people to make decisions and choices that benefit biodiversity. She is innovative and creative in her approach to biodiversity planning and prides herself on finding solutions to complex problems, to enable projects to proceed…with biodiversity as a core consideration. She enjoys delivering quality biodiversity planning training with Liz and Loci to enable - and empower - others to plan for better biodiversity outcomes.

Liz Drury

Liz is an experienced leader in biodiversity planning field, with over ten years of professional biodiversity conservation experience. She has extensive experience working in local and State government with a consistent aim to minimise the ecological impact of public and private infrastructure projects.

Liz has a particular interest in conserving indigenous urban biodiversity and maintaining ecological connectivity across the landscape.

In 2018, Liz and Melanie worked with Loci and biodiversity planners across the State to create a three-day biodiversity planning course for Victoria. It was the first of its kind for Victoria and has now run for two years. Following this, Liz has continued to work with these peers on various professional development options. Her dream is to see consistent and ethical planning across the State, where conserving biodiversity is a priority.

Sheridan Blunt

Sheridan is the Knowledge Sharing Coordinator of Loci Environment & Place Inc. has been developing highly regarded multi-disciplinary training sessions since 2015 to help practitioners achieve greater climate change, biodiversity and urban sustainability outcomes.

Sheridan is an urban and environmental planner whose expertise lies in the area of integrating biodiversity objectives with multiple environmental outcomes including green infrastructure, sustainable buildings, urban ecology, waterway protection and air quality.

Sheridan is currently working with DELWP on their Suburban Parks Program and has previously worked as City Sustainability Coordinator at Moonee Valley City Council, Sustainable Water Program Coordinator at City of Melbourne, as an environmental planner in the Philippines, and an urban planner in both the Victorian and NSW State Government. Sheridan also lectures and tutors at the University of Melbourne for its Masters of Urban Planning program