

The Team Koala Inc. is a registered charitable organisation established in 2009 and with a current membership of 952 and is based in Murwillumbah. Since inception Team Koala's objective has been the protection and preservation of a viable Tweed Coast koala population. Team Koala's activities include education programs at local primary schools and assisting Tweed Shire Council with the logistics of tree plantings in koala habitat on public lands. Team Koala also has a continuing commitment to increasing public awareness of the endangered status of the Tweed Coast koalas.

Team Koala opposes the application to modify the current consent conditions at Kings Forest as the application seeks to put in place an unacceptable environment that will be detrimental to the koala population. The development was only approved with strict KPOM conditions so now with this current modification proposal it once again becomes a contentious issue in the local community.

Team Koala is of the opinion that the initial development approval should be totally withdrawn as the developer has strayed so far, with this modification request, from the original development concept. This would permit the development to be judged on the developer's current concept and its resultant requirements.

It seems the developer is attempting to wear down community opposition by a series of modification applications over several years whereby the developer is adding a layer of complexity to what, for local lay residents, is already an extremely complex document. Consequently it is very difficult for the community to have the necessary competencies to challenge the modification proposal effectively.

Team Koala's objections to the modification request are as follows:

- 1) The developer seeks to renege on the commitment to plant 27 hectares of koala habitat in Cudgen Nature Reserve which was a strategic measure to counter the lack of planting space within the development site. This offsite offset should not be removed it should be retained. If the 27ha was to be onsite it needs to be in addition to the already planned protection areas and buffers otherwise it would provide a poor environmental outcome.

- 2) The developer must put in place proper measures to protect koalas by providing appropriate fencing on both sides of roads including interconnecting roads. The developer must keep the underpasses for fauna at sufficient intervals to permit their unimpeded movement across roads. The claim that koalas do not need fencing or underpasses to exclude them from urban areas is false, without fencing and underpasses the risk of vehicle strike and dog attack is raised to the highest level they are some of the main reasons for Koalas deaths. On the internet on the YouTube channel anyone can find and view videos of dogs crossing cattle grids quite easily, Cattle grids do not impede domestic/wild dogs from crossing – therefore any suggestion of their use is ridiculous and futile.
- 3) The developer be required to put in place an effective second East West wildlife corridor at least 100 metres wide between the existing central corridor and vegetation in the NW. The developer is not fully implementing the required EW wildlife corridor, the new proposal includes only a 50m wide x 400m long section of the southern EW corridor which does not actually provide a connected habitat link to the Eviron Road koala corridor. The amount of land now proposed for the corridor is less than one fifth of the minimum area required to complete the corridor. This is unacceptable as it will therefore be of little or no benefit to the Koalas. Also to suggest a non-connecting corridor of 50metres wide at most shows a lack of Koala expertise and environmental knowledge.
- 4) There are six matters listed in the modification request and all are aimed squarely at watering down the original development KPOM conditions that would have given the koalas some protection. The developer had a full page advertisement in the Tweed Border Mail on 1st December 2011 setting out the environmental gains for the Kings Forest development. The advertisement stated there would be a 40% increase in the Cudgen Nature Reserve by 178 hectares, 350 hectares would be under public ownership,

20,000 koala food trees would be planted and not a single tree will be removed from core koala habitat areas. The koala in Tweed Local Government area, east of Pacific Highway, are officially listed as endangered (NSW Scientific Committee 2015). This modification request demonstrates scant regard for our vulnerable wildlife. Rather the modification request resembles historical documents that has led to previous atrocities that has decimated wildlife and even indigenous peoples.

In summary Team Koala believes that the developers proposals are highly contradictory and confusing they seek to put in place modifications that are totally unacceptable and inadequate for the Kings Forest officially endangered Koalas and the Tweed Coast community that care for them. This community wants development that is sympathetic to the Tweed Coast's fragile ecosystem and enhances the environment, rather than degrading it. Development that takes into account the survival of koalas, and other fauna, enhances the life experiences of the people who will live here.