

Submission

Re: Modification to Kings Forest Residential Subdivision Stage 1 Project 08_0194 (MOD 4)

Dear Sir / Madame

I wish to place on public notice my objection to the modification request of a revised Koala Plan of Management for the above development.

As a preliminary comment, the developer was recently granted approval to proceed separately with the building of a service station next to the Kings Forest development and to be located immediately beside the pristine Cudgeon Creek and Reserve. We and many other residents and tourists have enjoyed padding up and down the creek enthralled by the animal and birdlife. The obvious threat posed by the service station with pollution and runoff, particularly when the creek floods, seems to have been ignored. This is a breeding and nesting area for many forms of coastal birdlife. Koalas share this same habitat. All will be at increased threat. I understand the developer has already damaged parts of the Creek with unapproved earthworks and has subsequently been fined. The developer now wishes to up the ante further. The developer now proposes modifications to the Kings Forest Koala Plan of Management which impose further threats on the adjoining environment.

The developer had previously agreed to and indeed had promoted to the local community these same conditions in order to win support and obtain government approval. The developer had been granted approval subject to these conditions being adhered to. All the required conditions were seen at the time as being essential to give the koala population half a fighting chance of sustaining itself. Indeed they were regarded the minimum conditions needed to do so. The wildlife experts do not disagree on this point. To now propose they can be weakened, reduced, or eliminated while maintaining a view that the koala habitat will not be further threatened seems cynical in the extreme. The only conclusion I can draw is that the developer said whatever was necessary to obtain the initial approvals but with the full intention to later backtrack on the promises hoping it would not be noticed.

My wife and I recently retired and moved from Sydney to this area for a number of reasons. Sydney itself has been under the claws of developers for a very long time but we believe it is getting worse with previously garden suburbs being converted to high rise and high population densities. The Tweed area seemed to very different, an apparent bulwark against the Gold Coast, acting as barrier to callous over development.

We also observed that the local council had appeared to have successfully balanced the competing pressures of population growth, business demands and increasing tourism encroaching on the fantastic wilderness areas here. Indeed it is increasingly popular partly because it has remained largely untrammelled by the rapid development seen north of the border. For example, the coastal suburb of Casuarina where we live includes many features which actively protect the native flora and fauna while also providing for the needs of residents and tourists alike, eg coastal bike path, literal forest barrier to the beach.

While the bush reserves and sanctuaries on the Tweed coastline are unique, they still struggle to preserve the pristine environment of flora and fauna against the constant threat of development. The koala habitats remaining are particularly under threat, with colonies now barely at self-sustaining levels. Efforts will need to be made in future to ensure their preservation and long term viability. The last thing it needs now are active and uncaring plans to assist in their decimation.

I therefore submit that, unless the developer can credibly and fully demonstrate that their proposed modifications will enhance the prospects for the koala community as well as the flora and fauna more generally, the current application for modifications must be wholly dismissed and the developer required to continue to adhere to the original approvals and associated conditions of the Koala Plan of Management.



Ian Robinson
Casuarina

8 August 2017