

Meeting minutes Koala Advisory Council

Details

Subject	Koala Advisory Council Meeting No. 5 – Specific content meeting
Chair	Mark Townend
Meeting type	Council meeting
Date and location	Tuesday 30 th July 2019 Innovation Lab, The Edge, State Library of Queensland,
Timing	10:00am – 12:00pm
Distribution	

Present

Name	Position/representation
Koala Advisory Council Members	
Mark Townend	RSPCA Queensland
Cameron Costello	Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation
Gemma Plesman	The Wilderness Society
Julie McLellan	Healthy Land and Water
Kirsty Chessher-Brown	Urban Development Institute of Australia
Crystal Baker	Local Government Association of Queensland
Rosie Booth	Australia Zoo
Chris Aston	Planning Group, Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning
Ramses Zietek	Program Delivery and Operations, Department of Transport and Main Roads
Speakers and Departmental Support	
Mandy Downes	Conservation Policy and Planning, Department of Environment and Science
Beth Clouston	Policy and Legislation, Conservation Policy and Planning, Department of Environment and Science

Catherine George	Koala Policy and Oversight, Policy and Legislation, Conservation Policy and Planning, Department of Environment and Science
Tiffany Harrington (minutes)	Koala Policy and Oversight, Policy and Legislation, Conservation Policy and Planning, Department of Environment and Science
Geoff Lundie-Jenkins	Wildlife and Threatened Species Operations, Conservation and Biodiversity Operations, Department of Environment and Science
Gordon Guymer	Queensland Herbarium, Department of Environment and Science
Michael Derwin	Project Management Office, Department of Environment and Science
Karen Kenny	Planning Group, Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning

Apologies – Koala Advisory Council Members

Name	Position/representation
Koala Advisory Council Members	
Kristy Gooding	Local Government Association of Queensland
Jonathan Rhodes	University of Queensland - School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Science
Al Mucci	Dreamworld Wildlife Foundation
Marina Vit	MOSAIC Property Group
Mick Stephens	Timber Queensland
Kirstin Kenyon	Conservation and Biodiversity Operations, Department of Environment and Science
Isabel Tarrago	Cultural Heritage, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

Items

Item #	Discussion
	<p>Welcome from Chair and other business</p> <p><u>Acknowledgement of Country – Cameron Costello</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cameron provided acknowledgement of Country to commence the KAC meeting. <p><u>Apologies and introduce proxies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Chair acknowledged those KAC members that were apologies for the KAC meeting including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Jonathan Rhodes – no proxy○ Isabel Tarrago – no proxy○ Mick Stephens – no proxy○ Kristy Gooding – proxy Crystal Baker○ Marina Vit – no proxy○ Kirstin Kenyon – proxy Geoff Lundie-Jenkins
1.	<p><u>Endorse minutes from 20 May 2019 meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Chair sought KAC members' endorsement of 20 May 2019 meeting minutes.• 20 May 2019 meeting minutes accepted by majority of KAC members.• Meeting minutes from 20 May 2019 meeting were endorsed. <p><u>Conflicts of interest</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Chair reminded KAC members of the confidentiality agreement and the importance of acting in accordance with this agreement.• The Chair acknowledged the usefulness of Queensland Government sharing confidential information to ensure better decisions are made.• The Chair sought agreement from KAC members to acknowledge the importance of maintaining confidentiality from information provided in the past, today and in the future.• All KAC members agreed.
	<p>Update on South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy</p> <p><u>Updated SEQ Koala Conservation Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The updated Koala Conservation Strategy (Strategy) was provided as to KAC members as an attachment.• The updated Strategy was generally consistent with the previous versions of the Strategy the KAC has seen but is now in the correct design format.• Confirmation was provided that KAC comments have been included in the updated Strategy in most instances. Comments that relate to the planning controls (to be included in amendments to the Planning Regulation) have not been included in the Strategy (e.g. clearing controls and exemptions).• KAC members are invited to provide any further comments.• The Strategy is going out for public consultation to test whether it is believed Queensland Government is implementing the KEP advice in the best possible way.• The Chair stated that the clearing controls need to be articulated in the Strategy to clearly communicate what is being implemented.
2.	<p><u>500m2 housing lot exemption</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• KAC discussed the 500m2 clearing exemption:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-There has been mixed feedback relating to this exemption: for urban areas this exemption is usually considered to be too big, for non-urban areas this exemption is considered to be too small as it does not provide for clearing required to install waste/rain water infrastructure etc.-It was agreed that the 500m2 exemption will be looked into further.- DES to review tier approach to 500m2 exemption based on zoning.• KAC discussed the 'in perpetuity' aspect of the 500m2 clearing exemption. The intent of this was clarified as: once you have cleared 500m2 of koala habitat area you cannot clear any more regardless of whether it is a new owner or a few years later. <p><u>Targets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• KAC discussed the need to further refine the koala population targets included in the Strategy.• DES intend to do baseline surveys in KPAS, koala habitat areas and exemptions to test whether the policy and management actions implemented with the Strategy are effective.

Cumulative impacts of exemptions

- Discussion on the exemptions that relate to State Government supported infrastructure including State Government projects such as PDAs, SDAs, infrastructure designations etc.
- Discussed that the State Government Supported Infrastructure – Koala Conservation Policy will be reviewed and strengthened following the initial implementation of the Koala Conservation Strategy and amendment regulation.
- A concern was raised that there isn't a clear strategy to manage the impacts to the actual population at the development site (i.e. while offsets will be delivered to compensate for the impact the actual population impacted will not be helped) and made reference to translocation.
- Request for an analysis of the cumulative impact of the 32 exemptions to give assurance that the Strategy and planning controls will achieve the no net loss target despite the exemptions and further articulation of the State Government's plan in relation to infrastructure within the strategy.

Planning Regulation

- KAC asked to review the Planning Regulation draft.
- It was confirmed that it is the intent that the Strategy and the Planning Regulation amendments will be released concurrently.
- Agreement that the intent of the planning controls, exemptions, etc. will be provided to local government and KAC members prior to release.

Traditional Owner consultation

- Work has commenced on consultation with Traditional Owners and Cameron agreed to further assist DES and DATSIP arrange and undertake consultation with Traditional Owners on the Strategy.

3.

Habitat mapping including consultation process and outcomes

The Department of Environment and Science recognised the assistance of LGAQ (and each local government individually) in providing comments on the consultation package.

- DES and DSDMIP have done a lot of consultation with local governments via confidentiality agreements through a number of workshops and one-on-one meetings.
- Local governments have raised a number of concerns particularly relating to the refinement of PKAs and that the State continue to work with local government on koala habitat area mapping and ensuring protection from day 1.

PKA mapping

- PKA boundaries have been smoothed.
- A number of KADAs (from GHD mapping) were removed as they were very isolated and provided no connectivity opportunities which did not achieve the purpose of PKAs.
- All PKADAs have been maintained.
- The new koala habitat area mapping has resulted in an extra 40,000ha of mapped koala habitat compared to the previously supplied version.

Koala habitat mapping

- Existing local government koala habitat mapping (used to administer the existing koala planning framework on behalf of the State Government) has come from two sources – GHD mapping and AKF mapping – both of which are over 10 years old and are therefore outdated.
- Some of the existing local government koala habitat mapping just uses the States koala habitat mapping (based on GHD mapping) however some local governments have previously received State approval to include additional areas as MSES koala habitat in their planning scheme.
- A 2 year transitional provision is proposed to be included in the regulatory amendments but this will only relate to koala habitat that is mapped as remnant or high value regrowth regional ecosystems that have been identified in the State's methodology, and included in existing mapping, as suitable koala habitat regional ecosystems (i.e. not all local government mapping such as regrowth areas that aren't high value regrowth).
- DES advised the transitional provision will give local government time to demonstrate that these areas are habitat (or not) and to update their planning schemes.
- Discussed that local governments have provided detailed and extensive feedback to the State regarding the State's mapping methodology for KPAs and koala habitat areas and have raised a number of concerns in relation to koala conservation outcomes and community expectations, particularly regarding areas of existing mapped koala habitat that are not proposed for inclusion in the State's new proposed koala habitat mapping.
- DES has given local governments an opportunity to discuss mapping one-on-one.

- DES will go back to local government to discuss revised mapping and proposed transitional provisions, including mechanisms/support to be provided to ensure ongoing protection of existing mapped koala habitat areas that will not be captured by the State's new koala habitat mapping for SEQ from day 1 commencement of the reforms.
- If mapping is revised it will be provided to KAC members prior to release.
- DES confirmed that koala habitat will only be mapped at a State level and that koala habitat will no longer be mapped at a local government level on the commencement of the new mapping and associated regulations.
- KAC discussed the pre-circulated draft mapping.
- With regards to scale issue – DES advised that the Queensland Herbarium is working on the regional ecosystem mapping (the high value regrowth layer) to improve its accuracy (e.g. removing pools etc.) but this won't be ready for the first mapping however it will be available for November when it is released.

Development in KPA without clearing koala habitat areas

- KAC discussed what happens when you in a KPA but not in a koala habitat area but there is a koala habitat tree – it was confirmed that if it isn't regulated (i.e. isn't koala habitat area) there will be no requirements/prohibitions.
- KAC discussed development in PKA that doesn't involve clearing – it was confirmed this is proposed to be assessed by local government using assessment benchmarks in the Planning Regulation. It was agreed that further detail regarding this proposal would be included in the KCS.

Committed development

- Discussed how committed development would be affected by the planning control amendments.
- It was confirmed that the transitional provisions ensure there will be no effect to master plan areas (including the Springfield master/structure plan), development that has already been approved, preliminary approvals that have been lodged but not decided or development approvals that are lodge and are consistent with approved preliminary approvals (if applicable, e.g. where a preliminary approval exists), lodged and approved development approvals will not be effected by the new koala reforms.
- It was agreed that the intent of the planning controls and transitional arrangements would be circulated with new mapping noting any details that need to be further refined) prior to release.

KPA-Rs

- Clarification was sought as to whether developers would have requirements to do restoration in KPA-Rs.
- It was clarified that this was not the case and that KPA-Rs are just areas that have been identified as areas that would be good to restore.
- The Offsets Policy will include a locational hierarchy that preferences koala habitat offset delivery in the closest KPA-R to the impact, then the next closest KPA-R or in an area that local government has endorsed as being suitable for restoration (e.g. through a planning scheme).
- DES agreed to include this detail in the Strategy.

4. **External review of koala habitat mapping**

- Discussed the results of the independent report on dwelling supply and mapping methodology which the KAC was provided as an attachment.
- In relation to the impact on dwelling supply:
 - Caboolture = nil
 - Redland = 3.1%
 - Narangba = 16%
- A number of inconsistencies were found.
 - Actual anomalies which DES is working to remove (with Queensland Herbarium)
 - Errors because of fire, illegal clearing, or a small dwelling where the rest of the lot is koala habitat.
- The dwelling supply figures will be adjusted if there are any changes to the mapping from consultation with local governments and circulated to KAC members prior to release.

5. **Operational Policy - Release of koalas and the take and release of koalas in imminent danger**

- Brief discussion on the draft policy (as a detailed discussion regarding this policy was scheduled for a meeting later in the day).

6. **Minister's address**

- The Minister acknowledge the work of the KAC members and that this was a complex issue with many issues to balance.
- The Minister stated that we are at a tipping point as Queensland's population is currently at 5 million with an upward trajectory expected.
- The Minister stated that the Chair has requested an extension of the time to finalise the Strategy outside of the originally recommended 12 months.
- The Minister acknowledged that there is still a need to hurry up and get it done but also make sure we get it right.
- The Minister also stated that the operational policy was a sensible step to take to manage threats and prevent hospitals seeing the same koalas over and over again.

Action

Item #	Action	Responsible	Status	Due Date
1.	Review tier approach to 500m ² exemption based on zoning	DES	Complete	
2.	Test tier approach to 500m ² exemption based on zoning	DES	Complete	
3.	Undertake analysis of the cumulative impacts of the exemptions	DES	Complete	
	Amend Strategy to:	DES	Complete	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the intent of clearing controls • Clarify requirements when in KPA but not clearing koala habitat area 			
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the current process for State Government supported infrastructure and intent for future review of this • Provide the intent of the offset locational hierarchy 			
5.	Assist DES and DATSIP in arranging and undertaking consultation with Traditional Owners on the Strategy	Cameron		November 2019
6.	Mapping of current v future koala habitat mapping will be redone for Gold Coast	DES	Complete	
7.	Provide local government and UDIA updated mapping (with locations and major roads)	DES	Complete	
8.	Provide local government and KAC members with the intent of planning controls, exemptions and transitional arrangements for comment	DES	Complete	
9.	Circulate proposed arrangements in relation to environmental offsets.	DES		20 September 2019
10.	Provide feedback on LGAQ's submission	DES		20 September 2019
11.	Consultation with local government on koala habitat area mapping.	DES	Complete	

12.	Dwelling supply analysis update (if koala habitat area mapping is changed as a result of local government consultation) provided to KAC members	DSDMIP	Pending finalisation of maps	27 September 2019
13.	Provide KAC final Koala Conservation Plan Map, Planning Regulation amendments, SDAP State Code prior to release	DES	Partially complete	
14.	Provide feedback to DES on the draft revised KCS	KAC members	Complete	

Next meeting

Date	18 September 2019
Time	10am-1pm
Location	State Library