



PO BOX 336
Bangalow NSW 2479
www.blackwoodecology.com.au
Phone: (02) 6687 1562
Mobile: 0431 233 331
mark@blackwoodecology.com.au

File No: 1808
20th May 2022

Joanne Kay
Ardill Payne & Partners
PO Box 20
BALLINA NSW 2478

Dear Joanne

RE: ADVICE ON KOALA IMPACTS, LOT 100 DP 1201719, HILLS ROAD, RILEYS HILL

Thank you for your invitation to provide a response to issues raised by the Friends of the Koala in their response to Planning Proposal PP 2016/006 Lot 100 Hills Road, Rileys Hill. An Ecological assessment of the site was completed by Blackwood Ecology in 2020 to accompany the planning proposal.

The Ecological assessment (2020) recorded scat evidence of Koalas on the site and provides location records of these scats. The assessment concludes that “Koala habitat occurs throughout forested areas in the east of the site with Koalas from the Broadwater National Park population able to access site habitats via Hills Road.” These forested areas are located almost entirely within the proposed E2 zoning on the site with some outlying trees located within the RU1 zone.

Friends of the Koala provided a submission on the planning proposal in December 2021. The submission raises issues with the potential for impacts on the local Koala population as a result of:

- Loss of connectivity.
- The proposed upgrading and widening of Hills Road.
- Potential loss of trees on adjacent Council land to the south of the rezoning area.
- Fragmentation and isolation of habitat.
- Mortality from dog attack and vehicle strike.

Koala feed trees on the site occur almost entirely within the proposed E2 and RU1 zones. The future residential subdivision of the site in accordance with the proposed development would not result in the loss of Koala feed trees.

Koalas are likely to move across open areas of the site at times to access areas of habitat to the west off Quarry Road and Rileys Hill Road. A future Development application for residential subdivision of the site should consider the movement of Koalas across the site and consider management requirements including requiring boundary fencing to allow for the free movement of Koalas.

As part of the Development Application process for the site, a Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) would be prepared for the site in accordance with the recommendations of BCD. This BMP would discuss the planting and/or assisted regeneration of Koala habitat within the E2 zone and other parts of the site. One of the aims of the BMP would be an overall increase in the availability of Koala feed trees on the site.

The site is to be accessed from the north via the existing Hills Road. Upgrading of this section of Hills Road would be unlikely to result in substantial tree loss that would be likely to have detrimental impacts on the local Koala population.

Any residential development has the potential to increase the level of threat to Koalas from dog attack and vehicle strike. Traffic speeds along Hills Road and along internal roads within the subdivision will be unlikely to exceed 50kmh. Council should consider the need for Koala signage or other traffic control

measures along Rileys Hill Road if this is considered appropriate. Future residents of the subdivision should be made aware of the presence of Koalas and the need to minimise any interactions with dogs.

The Amended Bush Fire Assessment Report (BCA Check 2020) concludes that bushfire APZs can be established within the site and will not require the removal of any vegetation within the E2 zone or the loss of any Koala feed trees on the site. It appears that vegetation along Hills Road to the east of the site may require periodic trimming to ensure this road is accessible for firefighting vehicles but any impacts arising from this are unlikely to be substantial.

Please contact me if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Free', with a stylized, flowing script.

Mark Free
MANAGER & PRINCIPAL ECOLOGIST