

Q&A FACTSHEET



COMPREHENSIVE KOALA PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

This factsheet has been developed by Campbelltown City Council to answer some of the more frequently asked questions about the draft Campbelltown Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management (CKPoM).

Why has Council prepared this Plan?

The draft CKPoM has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of NSW State Environmental Planning Policy 44 - Koala Habitat Protection (SEPP44), and has been developed to provide a consistent and holistic approach to development within areas of core koala habitat. The Plan will negate the need for the development of individual plans currently required under SEPP44, and reduce associated costs.

How has Council consulted with residents impacted by this Plan?

The Plan is currently on exhibition for 28 days, from 25 May to 22 June 2016. The public exhibition period gives the community the opportunity to provide comment and feedback on the Plan to Council. Residents have been notified of this public exhibition period via advertising in local newspapers, on Council's website and Facebook pages; with copies of the document available to view at Council's Civic Centre and all Council libraries, or online via Council's website.

Council is also currently organising community workshops to give residents a further opportunity to learn about the Plan, and have input into its development.

Will I have to change my existing fences?

The Plan does not require the modification of existing fences. The Plan provides development standards for new developments (not for existing home sites). New developments include rezonings and development applications (DA) for new homes.

Fencing requirements for new developments are outlined in Section 6.4.5 of the Plan, and must not restrict the movement of koalas. Design examples may include vegetation such as hedges or screens, open post and rail fences and raised fences.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of options, and designs for new developments will likely depend on the intended use of the site. However, fences that exclude koalas, such as colourbond fences, are not supported by the Plan.

Will I be restricted from owning a dog?

The Plan does not restrict any landowner from owning a dog. However, new dwellings in core koala habitat will be required to install a dog proof yard, for containment of dogs at night. Dog attacks are one of the biggest threats to our koalas, and actively managing domestic dogs by containing them at night is one of the most effective ways to reduce attacks on koalas.

If I have a swimming pool, will I have to make modifications to it under this Plan?

The Plan does not require any landowners with an existing swimming pool to make any further modifications. However, new pools are required to incorporate a pool design component to assist koalas in getting out of a pool if they were to fall in, some examples of which are outlined in Section 6.4.3 of the Plan. Although they can swim, koalas often drown in swimming pools because they are unable to climb back out if they have fallen in.

How does the Plan expect to reduce speed limits in existing areas?

The Plan does not propose to change speed limits on existing roads. The Plan proposes that any new roads, in areas of core koala habitat including Koala Management Precincts (KMPs), such as those created as part of a new residential development impose a speed limit of 40 km/h.

Does the plan involve any added costs to ratepayers or individual land owners?

The Plan does not propose to involve any added costs to ratepayers, with the exception of requirements for new houses. The management actions identified in Appendix A of the Plan outline a schedule of works that are required to implement the Plan. The majority of these actions will be undertaken by an existing Council position and/or budget. However, funding for some actions will be sought through external funding opportunities such as applications to the State Government for grants.

Why are my options to compensate for the removal of PKFTs?

Landowners proposing to remove Preferred Koala Food Trees (PKFTs) have the option to compensate for the loss of these trees either by; committing to replanting on their property, or providing financial compensation to Council to undertake this activity for them on an alternative site.

For minor developments (that result in the loss of \leq two PKFTs/ha), the cost of replacing these trees has been calculated at \$35 per replacement tree, which is the actual on-ground cost for planting the trees with a one year maintenance period.

How were the compensatory offset ratios for the loss of PKFTs developed?

Studies have shown that koalas feed on PKFTs only once a PKFT has reached a size of around 250mm diameter at breast height (DBH). Due to the low nutrient soils found in Campbelltown, the growth rates of trees are much slower than trees found on higher nutrient soils.

Therefore, the loss of trees greater than 250mm DBH is difficult to compensate for, because of the time it takes for these trees to grow to a suitable size. Under perfect conditions, it is estimated that it would take 10-15 years before a newly planted PKFT would become palatable for koalas, hence the need to keep the larger PKFTs in the ground where possible.

The Plan's offsetting ratio of 1:20 has been developed to take into account the importance of PKFTs to the survival of koalas; in addition to tree mortality rates, and the significant time lag between removing PKFTs and replacing this food resource in areas of low nutrient soils.

Who will sit on the Koala Management Committee?

Following adoption of the Plan, a Koala Management Committee (KMC) will be established to assist with the timely implementation of the Plan, and to undertake the assessment of non-conforming developments.

The KMC will consist of stakeholders from a number of government departments, including representatives from Council, NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), NSW Rural Fire Services (RFS), Western Sydney University (WSU); and two community stakeholders.

KMC members will be selected based on professional merit, and demonstrable experience in koala habitat and ecology and related fields.

Council wants to work towards a positive outcome for both the community and the local koala population, so if you have any suggestions on how we can work together to achieve this, please contact us!

FURTHER QUESTIONS

If you have any further questions, or would like to participate in a community workshop, please call Council on 02 4645 4000 or email koalas@campbelltown.nsw.gov.au