

A voice
for koalas
in the Redlands

www.koalagroup.asn.au
email: admin@koalagroup.asn.au

KAG Newsletter

April - June 2024

DIARY DATE

Sunday July 28
9am-11am
National Tree Day
Hilliards Park Drive Wellington Point (opposite no.34)
<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/national-tree-day-planting-registration-906401379927>
Call IndigiScapes for more info
38248611

Sunday August 4
KAG AGM
2pm- 4pm
Lions Club Hall
122 Shore St N, Cleveland.
The election of Committee members will be followed by refreshments and food.

Saturday August 24
Guided Bushwalk
9am-11am
Scribbly Gum Conservation Area, Alexandra Hills (meet cnr of McDonald Rd & Flinders St - entrance to reserve)

Sunday September 1
8.30am
KAG Tree Planting
End of Tuna Ct, Thornlands
All are welcome, holes are pre-dug and please wear closed-in shoes and sun sensible clothing. A home made morning tea is shared after the planting.

KAG has a new phone number- **0407094799**



A Huge Win for the Environment

In April this year Federal Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek announced that she was making a proposed decision to reject the Toondah Harbour development proposal. Following this announcement, on April 18, 2024 the developer Walker Corporation withdrew their development application.

About 1000 people gathered on the foreshore of Toondah Harbour on April 28th to celebrate this massive win at the Safe Passage Festival.

Members of the Toondah Alliance group (ACF Community Bayside, Australian Conservation Foundation, Aust Marine Conservation Society, Birdlife Aust, Birdlife Southern Qld, KAG, Qld Wader Study Group, Redlands2030, Stradbroke (Terangeri) Environmental and Cultural Protection Assoc.) spoke and thanked the community for their hard work, continuing support and perseverance to stop the proposal.

Whilst this decision by Minister Plibersek was a cause for huge celebrations, there are still concerns that the Toondah Harbour Precinct continues to be designated a Priority Development Area (PDA), originally by the Newman Government in 2019 but continued by the current Labor State Government.

This effectively means that another development application can be put forward with intensive development on the land portion of the Toondah Harbour Precinct which would still have devastating impacts on the koalas that call the area home.



Toondah Koala - GJ Walter Pk 28/4/24

Debbie Pointing (KAG President) Speech at Toondah Harbour Safe Passage Festival – Sunday April 28, 2024

Good morning everyone, it's been almost 8 years since our group embarked on the Toondah Koala GPS Tracking Project. Whilst it was a hard slog for our group for 12 months, we gained vital information from tracking those koalas to learn how they're managing to survive in this urban environment and also how they move around the area to access their habitat. When we make changes to the landscape, it causes koalas (and other wildlife) confusion, stress and leads to displacement. Whilst it was wonderful news that the government has rejected the proposal for Toondah Harbour, we are concerned that whilst the area still has a PDA over it, there will be further proposal, a land-based development that for koalas will still be devastating.

We would like to see our Council, led by a new Mayor advocate the State Government to remove that PDA, instead of allowing intensive development to occur. We would like to see the ferry terminal upgraded in a much more sensitive manner that enhances 'Redlands Naturally Wonderful Environment' and gives koalas and other wildlife a chance for a future.

The science is clearly telling us that koalas' habitat range is shrinking and moving eastwards towards to coast as the climate warms. The devastating bushfires of 2019/2020 warned us of many things, but with regards to koalas entire populations were wiped out in one hit. This is another reason that these coastal populations like we have here at Toondah and all along the Redland foreshore are vitally important to protect. They should be seen as an insurance policy for the future instead of being put in the too hard basket just because that's where humans also want to live.

It's been an absolute pleasure being part of the Toondah Alliance who have all been tirelessly fighting for almost 10 years to stop this environmentally destructive proposal. The community have played an instrumental role in Minister Plibersek's decision to reject it so I thank you, every single one of you for all the work you've done. We agree that our environmental laws are still broken and we will continue to advocate for much stronger protection of our natural environment and the wildlife that relies on it for their survival.

Thank you everyone, well done!

**This newsletter is produced by
The Koala Action Group Qld Inc**

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Lynn Roberts
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Jenny Niall
Treasurer Tanya Golitschenko
Newsletter Debbie Pointing
Executive Members
Chris Bray
Carmel Rackemann

Koala Sightings

March 2024 to May 2024

Birkdale: Collingwood Rd, Creek Rd, Jones Rd, Old Cleveland Rd E, Pitt Rd, Riverton Dr, Spoonbill St, Spurs Dr, Sunnybay Dr, Toronto Rd. **Cleveland:** Beach St, Channel St, Coburg St E, Fitzroy St, Island St, Middle St, Shore St E, Wellington St. **Mt. Cotton:** Irene Ln, West Mt Cotton Rd. **NSI:** Ballow St, Baker Ct, Oxley Pde, Tramican St, Yabby St. **Ormiston:** Delancey St, Dundas St W, Northern Arterial Rd, Stevens Pl, Sturgeon St, Wellington St. **Thornlands:** Boundary Rd, Dinwoodie Rd, Harrington Bvd, Majella Ct, Osprey Dr. **Victoria Pt:** Cameron Ct, Illidge Rd, Orana St. **Wellington Pt:** Bligh St, Fernbourne Rd, Grenaid Ct, Jacob St, Nelson Rd, Riverton Dr, Spurs Dr.

Other LGA's:

BCC: Salisbury **SCC:** Cambroom.

Primary data sources:

<https://biocollect.ala.org.au/project/index/edad0555-32a6-473e-8956-c70cf80329c4>
<https://biocollect.ala.org.au/acsa/project/index/f3d0ad81-135d-40bb-baec-50db553df6d0>
[https://biocache.ala.org.au/occurrences/search?q=text:koala&fq=c1959:%22Redland%20\(C\)%22&pageSize=100](https://biocache.ala.org.au/occurrences/search?q=text:koala&fq=c1959:%22Redland%20(C)%22&pageSize=100)

Report Koala Sightings: Redlands Coast Koala Watch Redland City Council

<https://biocollect.ala.org.au/ala/project/index/f3d0ad81-135d-40bb-baec-50db553df6d0>

**This season,
join Koala
Watch.**



<https://www.redland.qld.gov.au/koalawatch>

Two Fetini developments to take out habitat

Development proposals for the former Botanix site at Wellington Pt and Double Jump Rd at Victoria Pt have KAG extremely concerned about the amount of proposed tree removal and impacts to Koalas.

Both development sites are predominantly cleared from past land practices, yet Fetini Homes wants to remove more than 100 mature koala habitat trees on the Botanix site and an astronomical 1054 non-juvenile koala trees from the site at Double Jump Rd in Victoria Pt. These include mature trees containing hollows.

The developer has referred the Victoria Pt proposal to the Federal government to be assessed under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC) due to the significant impact it will have on koalas.

KAG believes the Botanix proposal must also be referred for assessment under the EPBC Act as it too will have negative impacts on the koalas that live on and around the site.

KAG has made comment on both of these proposals and considering the sites are mostly cleared, we will be aiming to significantly reduce the amount of habitat that the developer proposes to remove.

Koalas have been found present on both sites, with one of Council's Ambassador Koalas named 'Amy' being GPS tracked by researchers from the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) and shown to be living in gum trees on the Botanix site at Wellington Pt.

Australia Living Atlas (ALA) koala sighting records show that since 2020 there have been 169 koala sightings lodged within a one kilometre radius of the Botanix site.

Koala Safe Neighbourhoods, Redland City Council

https://www.redland.qld.gov.au/info/20301/koala_conservation/982/koala_safe_neighbourhoods

The trees Amy has been utilising are large mature eucalyptus habitat which Council has recognised as significant and previously given protection from removal with an 'Environmental Covenant' placed over this portion of the site.



The red dots show the trees that Birkdale Ambassador koala 'Amy' has been using on the former 'Botanix' site that Fetini Homes wants to develop on the corner of Nelson and Pitt Rds, Wellington Pt. Amy is one of numerous Koalas being tracked across the Redlands by researchers from the University of the Sunshine Coast who have been commissioned by Redlands Council to undertake this very important research work.

KAG maintains that the significant vegetation on this portion of what is otherwise a predominantly cleared site must be preserved.

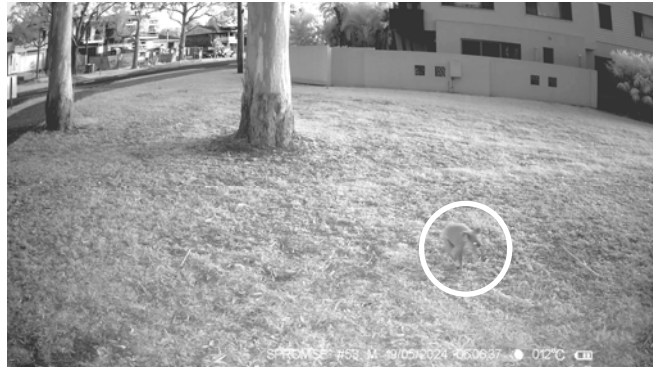
(Image courtesy of SCU/IndigiScapes facebook)

<https://www.facebook.com/IndigiScapes>

Disappointingly, Fetini Homes environmental consultant (28°South Environmental) appeared to undermine the significance of the habitat by stating in their report, "...the vegetation within the Site, particularly that retained within the south-western portion of the development footprint (approved and proposed), provides a low level of fauna movement foraging and breeding resource opportunities.....". (continued at right)

AI Powered Koala Road Safety Project

KAG is working with Griffith University Koala researchers to assist with a project using real-time artificial intelligence (AI) to analyse koala road crossing patterns. The project called 'Community Facilitated Large Scale AI Powered Koala Road Safety Monitoring Network' aims to demonstrate the use of expandable AI for feasible remote koala monitoring that can improve koala management strategies in the SEQ region.



The project is being funded by the Community Sustainability Action Grant awarded by the Qld Government's Dept of Environment and Science.

Two different koalas (both healthy) captured on camera traps in Cleveland

Apart from detecting the frequency and behaviour of koalas when moving across roads, the project also facilitates remote koala surveying, identification of joeys, disease and detection of threats from domestic and feral animals.

Eight camera traps, each with their own solar panel (photo at right) have been installed at five different sites across the Redlands in areas where koalas are known to be active and most likely to cross roads.

Images of any animals (koala, possum, wallaby, echidna, fox, dog etc) captured on the cameras automatically upload to a centrally managed web portal allowing partner groups to observe videos and download AI generated reports without needing continuous access to the camera units.

KAG has detected several healthy koalas at two of the sites, one a female with a joey in her pouch. No koalas have been sighted crossing roads yet but disturbingly, all camera sites apart from one have recorded extensive fox activity which has been reported to Council.

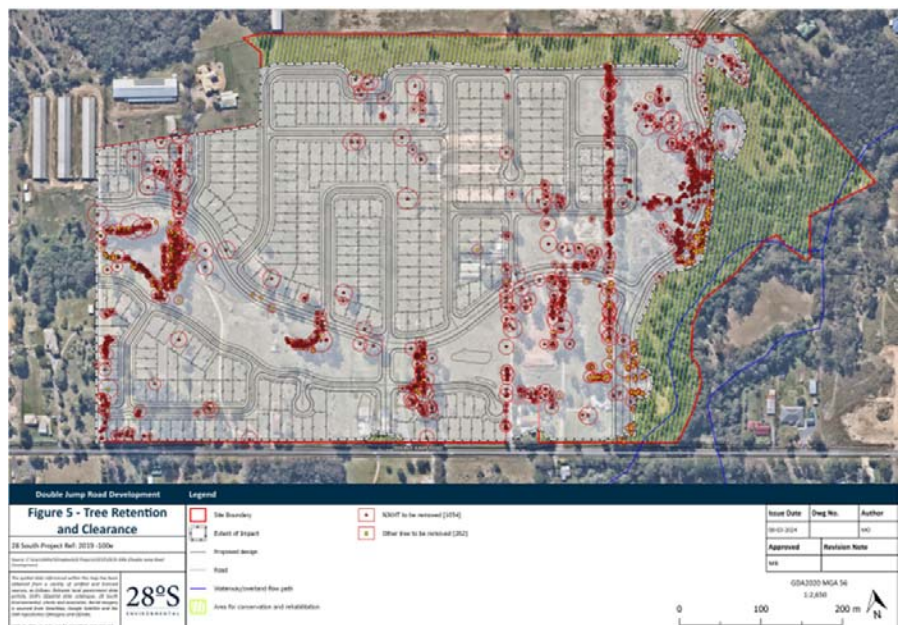


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KAG contends that the referral of the Double Jump Residential Estate development should be a controlled action. Further assessment is warranted through an Environmental Impact Study because the action will have an unacceptable impact on the Matters of National Environmental Significance, the Endangered Koala.

The removal of 1054 non-juvenile koala habitat trees (NJKHTs) in a predominantly cleared site is **completely unacceptable**. These trees are regarded as 'movement habitat' and 'paddock trees' and according to the [Review of koala habitat assessment criteria](https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/epbc/publications/review-koala-habitat-assessment-criteria-and-methods) (ANU, 2021) are habitat critical to the species survival.

<https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/epbc/publications/review-koala-habitat-assessment-criteria-and-methods>



Tree Retention and Clearance plan - Fetini development proposal at Double Jump Rd, Victoria Pt

(Refer to page 4 for more information on the value of hollows).

VALUE OF TREE HOLLOWES

- One of the most pressing concerns for Australia's native species is the removal of old trees, which represents the greatest threat to their survival
- Australia, with its unique biodiversity, holds the highest number of species dependent on hollows globally, followed closely by North America
- Unlike North America, where woodpeckers can create hollows, no vertebrate species in Australia possesses this ability
- Approximately one third of terrestrial animals, two thirds of microbats and 15% of birds rely on tree hollows for their survival
- Hollows are predominantly formed in eucalyptus trees, constituting approximately 90% of all hollows
- Veteran trees, characterised by their great age, size, or condition, are crucial for maintaining hollow habitats. These trees are typically regulated or significant, with circumferences greater than 2 metres or 3 metres, respectively.
- Hollows generally form in eucalyptus trees that are between 120 and 150 years old. These aged giants are the backbone of the hollow ecosystem, providing shelter and breeding grounds for countless species.



An example of a 'veteran' eucalyptus tree in the Redlands

Source: [Protecting Hollow Habitats: Vital For Australia's Unique Wildlife – PlantingSeeds \(ps.org.au\)](https://www.ps.org.au/articles/protecting-hollow-habitats-vital-for-australias-unique-wildlife)
<https://www.ps.org.au/articles/protecting-hollow-habitats-vital-for-australias-unique-wildlife>

**To report a sick or injured koala contact
Redlands Wildlife Rescue Service (24 hours) on 3833 4031**

Volunteer for wildlife rescue at Redland City Council

https://www.redland.qld.gov.au/info/20268/volunteering_and_local_initiatives/670/volunteer_for_wildlife_rescue

KAG Membership:Application/Renewal Please complete the following and forward to: KAG: PO Box 660, Capalaba Qld 4157 or email admin@koalagroup.asn.au
Fees can now be made via direct debit to: Koala Action Group Qld Inc. Suncorp Bank BSB: 484-799 Account No. 001748631 and include your name in the ref. line. Please note: If paying by cheque or money order, ensure the payee line includes the full name - Koala Action Group Qld Inc. (the bank does not accept abbreviations)

Name -----

Address -----

Phone/email -----

Please specify membership type. Annual membership rates:

Single:\$15; Family:\$25; Pensioner:\$10; Under 18:\$10 Donation(optional)

Please indicate if you are interested in any of the following.

Tree planting { } Help with displays { } Letterbox drops { } Wildlife Rescue { }

I apply for membership of the Koala Action Group Qld Inc and enclose my membership fee.

Signature:Date:.....

All membership renewals are due in June unless otherwise stated on newsletter envelope's address label. Email recipients will receive an email renewal advice.

Note: KAG has a Public Liability Policy with a limit for any one occurrence of \$ 30,000,000