Koala Advisory Council

Details

Subject	Koala Advisory Council Meeting 10
Chair	Mark Townend
Meeting Type	Council Meeting
Date and location	Wednesday 5 August 2020 – Microsoft Teams Virtual meeting
Timing	2:00-3:00pm

Attendees

Name	Organisation
Mark Townend	Spinal Life Australia
Al Mucci	University of Queensland, School of Agriculture and Food Sciences
Rebecca Kenny, proxy for Chris Aston	Planning Group, Queensland Treasury
Kirstin Kenyon	Conservation and Biodiversity Operations, Department of Environment and Science (Proxy for Kirstin Kenyon)
Jonathan Rhodes	University of Queensland - School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Science
Kirsty Chessher-Brown	Urban Development Institute of Australia
Kristy Gooding	Local Government Association of Queensland
Kristy Gooding	Local Government Association of Queensland
Lawrence Swan	Director of Culture, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
Marina Vit	MOSAIC Property Group
Mick Stephens	Timber Queensland
Ramses Zietek	Program Delivery and Operations, Department of Transport and Main Roads
Revel Pointon	Environmental Defenders Office (proxy for Gemma Plesman, The Wilderness Society)
Rosie Booth	Australia Zoo

Speakers

Name	Organisation
Alex Graham	Environmental Policy and Programs, Department of Environment and Science
Gordon Guymer	Queensland Herbarium, Department of Environment and Science
Steven Howell	Queensland Herbarium, Department of Environment and Science
Karen Hussey	Environmental Policy and Programs, Department of Environment and Science

Apologies

Name	Organisation
Chris Aston	Planning Group, Queensland Treasury
Julie McLellan	Healthy Land and Water
Cameron Costello	Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation
Bill Ellis	University of Queensland, School of Agriculture and Food Sciences

Items

Item #	Discussion
1	**Welcome from Chair and other business** *Mark Townend* **Welcome to Country** *Lawrence Swann* **Conflicts of interest:** Nil Minutes from the previous meeting endorsed.
2	**Meeting purpose** *Alex Graham* • DES provided an overview of the purpose of the meeting, and acknowledged that the Department appreciates the Council members' time at short notice. • Meeting called to provide an update on revisions to the LRKHA, and consultation outcomes, noting that advice on LRKHA was provided to KAC in the June meeting.
3	**Locally Refined Koala Habitat Areas (LRKHA)** *Gordon Guymer and Steven Howell* • The Queensland Herbarium provided an update on LRKHA revisions, noting that the methodology that was used to define koala habitat has been peer reviewed by CSIRO, and that it is repeatable and a useful tool for decision making. • Some south east Queensland local governments submitted areas in May and June 2020 that they considered to be koala habitat. • After analysis by the Queensland Herbarium, about 20-30% of nominated areas met the criteria. The Queensland Herbarium then ran an exercise to identify high value regrowth across other local government areas. • The habitat model was reapplied to high value regrowth (HVR) additions, and removed PMAV Cat X, slivers, and PDA, UDA and SDA. • A new version of the LRKHA has been prepared, as well as an associated updated release package. • The technical report on the koala habitat mapping will also be updated. • Most of the new areas will become core in 2021 because they meet the model requirements. • Options have been presented to local government about the inclusion of LRKHA in the next proposed update.
4	**Outcomes from recent meetings** *Alex Graham* • DES presented an overview of recent meetings and detailed the key remaining issues for stakeholders, and the proposed response to those issues. • DES has met with all South East Queensland local governments and held side meetings with peak groups, including some members of the KAC. • Rebecca Kenny provided an overview of the anticipated impacts of the proposed LRKHA mapping on the dwelling and land supply targets. The

estimated impact is considered manageable from a dwelling and land supply perspective given there is more than 15 years supply across the SEQ region, however some localised impacts are anticipated.

- A number of high-level issues were discussed, including:
  - Future consultation on mapping – to inform mapping and be informed
  - Councils seek additional areas as mapped koala habitat and/or other means to protect through planning schemes
  - Koala mapping updates may impede required dwelling growth under *ShapingSEQ* and industry impacts
  - Some isolated patches are mapped, which are not strategic locations for conservation.
  - Mapping habitat within PDAs, SDAs and DAs is necessary to indicate that those areas contain koala habitat, but that policy intent confusion may arise as these areas are exempt from the new regulations.

Council members responded with varying viewpoints on the presented options to resolve the issues:

- Discussion on the LRKHA update, including:
  - More consultation on mapping is required prior to mapping being finalised. Consultation should be in the form of adequate time for local governments to review the mapping data and provide feedback on that data, prior to it being finalised by DES.
  - Consideration should be given to renaming the LRKHA update as the update is based on the State's methodology and includes areas not previously protected or nominated by local governments.
  - The proposed update results in a significant increase in the amount of LRKHA, since the introduction in February 2020, and may result in confusion.
  - The potential impacts to dwelling supply, particularly in the context of Covid19 and the subsequent impacts to the economy.
- Pros and cons for removing PDAs, SDAs, UDAs and areas with a DA, including:
  - If areas that are exempt are mapped there may be a high level of confusion, and unnecessary community concern, when legal clearing occurs in these areas.
  - Conversely, there is a need for transparency, and to encourage consideration of avoidance of koala habitat in development schemes.
- Pros and cons for removing isolated patches from the mapping including:
  - The benefit of mapping isolates for species conservation, including species other than koalas.
  - A recognition that small patches are important, however their location and proximity to other habitat is critical.

Future KAC involvement in mapping updates
Alex Graham

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- This agenda item was not discussed in detail due to time restrictions, however KAC members were asked to provide out-of-session notes and DES will present an options paper at the next meeting.

Closing remarks
Mark Townend

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- The Chair thanked KAC members for their time. Noting the need to finalise and release the Strategy very soon, the Chair offered KAC members another opportunity to raise any outstanding questions or comments for the

Department. No other questions or comments were forthcoming and the meeting was closed.

Action

Action	Responsible	Status	Due Date
DES to meet with SEQ local governments to resolve outstanding mapping issues prior reporting back to KAC with outcomes from those meetings	DES	Complete	31 August 2020
DES to continue to meet with key members of the KAC to resolve issues raised during the meeting	DES	Complete	20 August 2020
Provide suggestions for involvement in mapping updates to DES in writing	KAC members		30 September
Present options for KAC's involvement and general consultation for mapping updates	DES		November

Actions carried over from previous meetings

Meeting #	Action	Responsible	Status	Due Date
8	Define timeframes for completing implementation plans	DES	In progress	30 September 2020
8	Reconvene a Koala Advisory Council meeting to discuss implementation plans	DES		1 October 2020
9	DES to provide clarification on the interaction between the transition of LRKHA into core habitat and the target for koala habitat, within the MERI framework, yet to be developed	DES		1 December 2020

Next meeting

Date	November 2020
Time	TBA

Location	TBA