

# Self-assessment Guideline

Nature Conservation

## Assessment and management of potential impacts on koala habitat arising from state government supported infrastructure projects

*Assessment Guidelines provide a framework for consistent application and interpretation of legislation, policy and for the management of other non-legislative matters. Assessment Guidelines are not intended to be applied inflexibly in all circumstances. Individual circumstances may require a modified application.*

### 1. Purpose of this Guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to assist government entities and consultants working on behalf of government entities in understanding the intent of the self-assessable State Government Supported Infrastructure – Koala Conservation Policy (SI Policy). This guideline provides advice on how infrastructure development projects may self-assess and report on their compliance with the requirements of the SI Policy and policies and legislation related to the protection of koalas and their habitat.

The use of this guideline does not guarantee compliance with the requirements of the SI Policy and other relevant policies and legislation.

### 2. Ministerial Infrastructure Designation

Prior to making a Ministerial Infrastructure Designation the Planning Minister must be satisfied that adequate environmental assessment and consultation has occurred. In making that decision the Minister must act in accordance with the statutory guidelines and rules in the [Minister's Guidelines and Rules \(MGR\)](#).

Chapter 7 of the MGR prescribes the process for environmental assessment and consultation for making or amending a ministerial designation (section 36(3) of the *Planning Act 2016*).

Government entities are encouraged to use the process outlined in the MGR and follow the advice provided in the non-statutory document [Guidance for the Ministers Guidance and Rules – Guidance for Plan Making](#) (Ministerial Infrastructure Designations are covered in section 12 of the MGR guidance).

Assessment of the adherence to the mitigation hierarchy and other conservation measures required in the Ministerial Infrastructure Designation process may be used to inform an assessment against the self-assessment criteria in the SI policy.

Similarly, integrating the assessment against the requirements in Table 1 and 2 of the SI Policy into the environmental assessment for the MID would assist in streamlining assessment requirements under both processes.

### 3. Background

The [State Government Supported Infrastructure – Koala Conservation Policy \(SI Policy\)](#) was first endorsed by the Queensland Government on the 30 August 2012 to ensure that state infrastructure projects that impact on koala habitat, which are not otherwise regulated, meet the similar requirements to the private sector, ensuring equitable treatment of koalas in State and non-State infrastructure projects.

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It is expected that the SI Policy will be reviewed and amended from time to time to ensure that State infrastructure projects are held to the same account as the private sector and transitional arrangements put in place to assist projects.

The SI Policy applies to all Queensland government supported infrastructure activities within the SEQ Region defined in the Planning Regulation 2017, identified as a type of infrastructure listed under Schedule 5, and public housing as defined under Schedule 24 of the Planning Regulation 2017. Government entities are required to undertake a self-assessment and comply with the requirements of either:

- the outcomes specified in the SI Policy; or
- the outcomes specified in an approved memorandum of understanding (MOU) endorsed by the chief executive responsible for the administration of the Nature Conservation Act 1992.

### 3.1. South East Queensland koala planning regulations

The Queensland Government amended the planning framework on 7 February 2020 to address a key threat to koala populations in South East Queensland—loss of habitat. The Nature Conservation and Other Legislation (Koala Protection) Amendment Regulation amended the Environmental Offsets Regulation 2014, Planning Regulation 2017, Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017 and the Vegetation Management Regulation 2012 to provide increased protection to Koala Habitat Areas in South East Queensland.

The koala planning regulations introduced koala priority areas, which are large, connected areas that include Koala Habitat Areas; and implements strict new clearing restrictions, prohibiting clearing of Koala Habitat Areas within Koala Priority Areas. Development impacting Koala Habitat Areas outside of Koala Priority Areas is regulated and the avoid, minimise, mitigate, offset hierarchy is applied.

There are two key guidelines associated with the koala planning regulations:

- koala-state-development-assessment-provisions-sdap-guideline; and
- koala-assessment-benchmarks-guideline (relevant to Planning Regulation - Schedule 11 assessments)

The SI Policy was amended in 2023 to align with the koala planning regulations introduced in 2020 and commenced (and published) on **13 April 2023**. This completes a key action of the SEQ Koala Conservation Strategy 2020-2025 to transition to new arrangements to ensure Government Supported Infrastructure is held to a standard consistent with the private development.

## 4. Application

SI Policy 2023 applies to the planning and delivery of all Queensland Government Supported Infrastructure projects; identified as any type of infrastructure listed under Schedule 5 and public housing defined under Schedule 24 of the Planning Regulation 2017; and within the South East Queensland Koala Protection Area (SEQKPA).

ALL Government Supported Infrastructure Projects will be required to demonstrate that the development has implemented the design and safety koala conservation measures in Column 1 of Table 1. This includes maintenance and repair work undertaken to maintain existing assets in good working condition.

New infrastructure and works on existing assets which changes or improves the asset through expansion or upgrade, will require assessment against Column 3 of Table 1 unless otherwise exempt.

It is the entities responsibility to consider any costs of complying with the SI Policy when planning the project and seeking budget.

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## 4.1. Exemptions and the low impact threshold

Exemptions are listed in column 2 of Table 1. If Government Supported Infrastructure is exempt from complying with the SI Policy then the entity needs only to ensure that Column 1 of Table 1 is met and that annual reporting reflects that and notes the reason it is exempt from the full application of the SI Policy.

These types of exemptions are in place to ensure assessment processes are not duplicated. For example, if the project is declared a controlled action under the Commonwealth's *Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, for the consideration of koalas and their habitat then the project would be subject to the assessment requirements of the Commonwealth, including offsets.

A low impact threshold of impacts in a Koala Habitat Area has been set in the SI Policy. Government Supported Infrastructure in a Koala Habitat Area is exempted from assessment against Column 3 of Table 1 where a project involves interfering with koala habitat to:

- a. a total area of 500m<sup>2</sup> or less; or
  - b. a total of 12 non juvenile koala habitat trees or less
- on the land to which the development applies.

The total area or number of trees is where it relates to a Koala Habitat Area and is calculated on a project basis - a discrete project that is planned and funded. Scattered trees outside of a Koala Habitat Area are **not** considered in the threshold although it is important to retain these individual trees where possible to meet the koala conservation outcomes in Column 1 of Table 1. Where there is an accumulation of small impacts over a given time, for example additional classrooms and facilities are planned and funded on an existing school over two years, it may be reasonable to consider these as one impact. Schools can also work to their infrastructure layout plan and ensure building work is delivered in the approved footprint. Building footprints and associated expansion areas should seek to avoid impacting koala habitat trees and mapped Koala Habitat Areas on the school grounds.

Given the contemporary Koala Habitat Area mapping is based on polygons of remnant and high value regrowth regional ecosystems the area basis will be used to determine whether the impact is below or exceeds the threshold. The area between trees is part of the koala habitat area and is included. In some cases where multiple trees on the edge of a polygon are proposed to be cleared, then the total impact area can be calculated by measuring the area or by multiplying the number of trees by .004ha or 40 square metres can be used. Note that determining the low impact threshold or trigger for column 3 is different to the calculation of offsets - See section 7 of this guideline.

Exemptions are included that relate to development that involves interfering with koala habitat for necessary fire management; and to remove or reduce a foreseeable or imminent or ongoing risk to persons, public or private property, or public safety. The dictionary in the SI Policy includes examples to assist in interpreting these exemptions.

Interfering with koala habitat where it is necessary to undertake maintenance work or repair work on Government Infrastructure; and where it is necessary to undertake retrofit work on existing transport infrastructure to install koala mitigation or management structures is also exempt. Maintenance work means work undertaken to keep Government infrastructure or transport infrastructure in good, working condition, including repair work, that does not change or improve the infrastructure through expansion or upgrade.

## 4.2. Transitional arrangements

The SI Policy 2017 and associated mapping (repealed SPP koala habitat values mapping referred to as 'State government supported infrastructure Koala Conservation Policy on Queensland Globe') continues to apply to approved State Government supported infrastructure projects and projects that were funded or approved

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within 12 months of the commencement of the SI Policy. This provision accounts for projects that have significant planning. Column 2 of Table 1 in the SI Policy 2023 sets out the transitional arrangements.

However, public sector entities acting under the SI Policy 2017 are encouraged to align with the contemporary mapping where possible. In particular entities should consider how their project can be designed and operated to avoid impacts on the mapping and how impacts can be mitigated. Also, entities should align offsets delivery with identified priority restoration areas close to the impact as noted in Chapter 2A of the Environmental Offsets Policy.

Determining the relevant SI Policy involves knowing when funding was committed to a project in lieu of there being a formal approval date. If the funding is committed to the project before OR, within 12 months of the SI Policy 2022 being commenced; the current SI Policy or MOU may be applied. Again, if possible and to provide greater alignment with the government's priorities, the SI Policy 2023 should be applied where possible.

The repealed SPP koala habitat values mapping referred to as 'State government supported infrastructure Koala Conservation Policy on Queensland Globe' can be found on Queensland Globe and downloaded from QSpatial (<http://qldspatial.information.qld.gov.au/catalogue/custom/index.page>) by searching "Former koala policy layers – 2010-2019 (superseded). The relevant layer is called "SEQ\_KOALA\_SPP\_HABVAL".

## 5. Key Concepts

### Koala ecology

koala habitat tree means— (a) a tree of the *Corymbia*, *Melaleuca*, *Lophostemon* or *Eucalyptus* genera that is edible by koalas; or (b) a tree of a type typically used by koalas for shelter, including, for example, a tree of the *Angophora* genus.

### Food requirements

The koala, *Phascolarctos cinereus*, is an arboreal (tree living) marsupial that prefers to eat leaves of the *Eucalyptus* genera in a variety of different forest types, particularly those occurring on more fertile soils with a higher nutrient status, as biophysical measures like soil type and water availability affects the palatability and nutrient level of the leaves. Koalas are also known to forage on other species, such as *Corymbia*, *Lophostemon*, *Melaleuca* and *Angophora*.

### Shelter and refuge requirements

Koalas exhibit a novel strategy to regulate their body temperature when exposed to high temperatures as a result of their arboreal lifestyle. Koalas need to move from food trees to shelter trees during the day to reduce their body temperature and practice conductive heat loss by seeking out and resting against tree trunks that are substantially cooler than ambient air temperature. Shelter and refuge trees are therefore as important as food trees because koalas cannot eat if their body temperature is too high and these trees provide safe refuge from predators.

The location and relative proximity of food and shelter trees is important to consider when determining which koala habitat areas are more significant than others.

### Koala Habitat

Koala habitat means:

- (a) an area of vegetation in which koalas live and that includes a koala habitat tree; or
- (b) an area of vegetation that consists primarily of koala habitat trees and which is reasonably suitable for sustaining koalas; or
- (c) a partially or completely cleared area used by koalas to cross from an area mentioned in paragraph (a) or (d) to another area mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b)

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As defined in the Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017: ([legislation.qld.gov.au](http://legislation.qld.gov.au))

## **Mapped Koala Habitat Area**

Mapped koala habitat area means an area shown on the Koala Conservation Plan Map that the chief executive of the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* has determined to be a koala habitat area due to the combination of biophysical measures and suitable vegetation of the area.

Koala habitat areas are defined in the Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017 as those identified as containing koala habitat which is essential for the conservation of a viable koala population in the wild. The main purpose of identifying koala habitat areas is to avoid or minimise impacts on koala habitat to ensure the long-term persistence of koala populations in the wild.

Accessing the maps: Koala mapping | Environment | Department of Environment and Science, Queensland ([des.qld.gov.au](http://des.qld.gov.au)) and <http://www.qld.gov.au/environment/land/management/vegetation/maps/map-request> and <https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au/>

## **Koala Priority Areas**

Koala Priority Areas have been identified to strategically focus long-term management and monitoring effort on areas that have the highest likelihood of achieving conservation outcomes for koalas.

## **Koala home range and population habitat size**

### *Koala home range*

Koalas require suitable extents of habitat that provide for the species ecological, physiological, and behavioural needs including feeding, seeking shelter and water, breeding, raising young and escaping threats such as predators. The area required to sustain a single koala depends on the quality of the available habitat and the extent to which it meets the animal's needs. Higher quality soils, such as alluvial soils, in areas with greater water availability generally produce higher quality habitat where trees are larger, have higher nutrient content, occur at greater densities and have greater canopy cover. Koalas have a smaller home range in areas with high quality habitat. As habitat quality reduces, less resources are available and the amount of area a koala needs for a home range increases.

In South East Queensland, the smallest home range on highly fertile soils is generally one hectare for female koalas and two hectares for male koalas. Across the region, however, home ranges are often larger, particularly further west from the coast.

### *Habitat size for koala populations*

The minimum patch size for a viable koala population will depend, to some extent, on the level of koala habitat connectivity. For example, if several small patches of koala habitat areas are very close together (also known as 'highly connected') they may function equivalent to a single larger patch if the koalas can move freely and safely between them. However, if a patch is highly isolated, then it would need to be much larger to support a viable population.

Koala habitat areas that are less than 2ha in size, may be important to assist connectivity as stepping stones between larger patches of habitat.

## **Koala movement**

Koalas will occasionally change trees during daylight hours but are most active at night, dawn and dusk. Female koalas have been found to move about 100m each day while males move about 200m.

In the breeding season (August to January) koalas move more frequently as they shift from tree to tree in search of a mate. They often move greater distances outside of their usual home range to find a mate.

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Between June and December, juvenile koalas establish their own home range. Young koalas can travel long distances to find areas to establish themselves. This can be tens of kilometres in a highly modified environment.

Research has found instances where dispersing animals may move up to 2-5 km in a single night even in highly fragmented urbanised landscapes.

## **Koala safe movement**

Safe koala movement opportunities within and across a site facilitate geneflow for healthy viable koala populations; minimise threats to resident and transient koalas; and provide food or refuge sources for koalas.

Threats to the safe movement of koalas in urban areas, or between stepping stone habitat, increases with distance between habitat and the number of threats introduced. This affects a koala's ability to move safely from one patch of habitat to another. As landscapes become modified, native vegetation (including mapped koala habitat areas) is replaced by barriers to koalas, such as urban development, roads, rail lines, fences and large expanses of cleared land. These barriers make it hard or impossible for koalas to move safely through the area. In existing or developing urban areas, or areas where road or rail is proposed, the safe movement of koalas and connectivity can be improved by using a range of koala-sensitive planning and design measures that aim to mitigate the risk to koalas.

Further information on this is provided in the Koala-sensitive Design Guideline: A guide to koala-sensitive design measures for planning and development activities.

## **Connectivity**

Connectivity means patches of mapped koala habitat areas that are linked to each other in a larger network of mapped koala habitat areas. Connectivity can be achieved in through:

1. physical connections between mapped koala habitat areas which includes areas of native vegetation; and
2. the ability for koalas to safely move between patches of mapped koala habitat areas without increasing the risk of injury or death of a koala.

Highly connected patches means mapped koala habitat areas that are less than 200 metres apart.

Connectivity affects the ability of plants or animals to move through a landscape. Higher levels of connectivity exist where there are fewer barriers to dispersal or migration. Maintaining safe and effective connectivity is important within and between patches of koala habitat to maintain viable koala populations.

Koala movement is safer where there are no obstacles or cleared land within a koala's home range or between nearby habitat patches. The greater the distance a koala spends on the ground moving between habitat trees and/or the more barriers in its way, the higher the risk is of death or injury from exhaustion, lack of food and safe shelter, heat stress, dog attack, rival koala attacks or vehicle strike. Urban areas, major transport routes and large expanses of cleared land provide the greatest risk to connectivity.

Maintaining and establishing corridors are the clearest way to increase connectivity, as they provide structural and often vegetated connections between habitats in the landscape. There are other ways to increase connectivity where having a corridor is not possible, such as reducing the distance between vegetated koala habitat areas and retaining stepping stones containing habitat trees.

Applying koala sensitive design principles in urban areas or across transport routes also assists connectivity. For further information refer to Koala-sensitive Design Guideline: A guide to koala-sensitive design measures for planning and development activities.

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## Corridors

A corridor is an extent of vegetated or cleared unobstructed land that joins two or more larger areas of similar wildlife habitat allowing for wildlife movement. Adequate corridor width requires consideration of numerous factors, including the likely home range size of a koala based on the native vegetation type in that area, the length to width ratio of the corridor, topography and vegetation within the corridor and adjacent land use.

For koalas corridors can be described as:

1. koala habitat areas remaining intact and connected by continuous koala habitat areas;
2. continuous corridors of native vegetation with koala habitat trees between koala habitat areas;
3. continuous corridors of non-native vegetation with scattered koala habitat trees between koala habitat areas;
4. cleared land with small, segregated patches of vegetation with scattered koala habitat trees known as "stepping stones" between koala habitat areas;
5. cleared land that contains scattered koala habitat trees between koala habitat areas, ideally where the trees are 30m apart but no more than 200m apart and in small clumps to provide versatility to meet koala's habitat needs.

## Stepping stones

Stepping stones are small patches of habitat where koalas can eat, rest and escape predators as they move between larger areas of habitat. Stepping stones can include small patches of Koala Habitat Area (e.g., areas less than 2ha), patches of other vegetation that includes scattered koala habitat trees, or a single koala habitat tree. Stepping stones within urbanised environments include parks, vegetated waterways, easements and road reserves with koala habitat trees. There may also be several stepping stones between large patches of koala habitat areas that facilitate koala movement over long distances.

Stepping stones must be as close as possible. In non-urban areas they should be a maximum of 100m from large koala habitat areas or other stepping stones as this is the average distance that a female koala will move in a day. In urban environments the distance between areas of refuge should be 30m or less to significantly reduce the risk of koalas becoming stressed and/or encountering threats from dogs and vehicles.

Stepping stones at much greater distances should not be discounted, as these have shown to be important for koalas, particularly young males dispersing long distances when establishing new home ranges.

## 6. Assessment against the requirements of the SI Policy 2022

### 6.1. Incorporating koala conservation measures (Column 1, Table 1)

**ALL government infrastructure projects** (including those otherwise exempt) in SEQ will be required to demonstrate that the development has been designed to minimise impacts, maintain connectivity, and provide safe movement opportunities during the construction and operation of the development. From Column 1 of Table 1:

1. Where possible, development avoids fragmenting KHA within the land to which the development applies.
2. Where possible, development does not impede or restrict the movement of koalas within the land to which the development applies and provides safe koala movement measures between highly connected patches of retained KHA.
3. Clearing of koala habitat trees must be carried out in a way that complies with sequential clearing conditions.

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4. Development must ensure that:
  - a. measures are taken in construction practices to not increase the risk of death or injury to koalas; and
  - b. native vegetation in an area identified by a proponent to be retained as a safe koala movement measure is progressively restored if it must be impacted during site operations.
5. Where appropriate in the context of the landscape, landscaping activities provide food, shelter and movement opportunities for koalas consistent with the site design.

Native vegetation areas to be retained for safe koala movement might be identified during the design of new infrastructure or may exist in the landscape as a result of a previous development approval or by Council. The intent of 6.1.4.b is to ensure these patches are retained or restored if impacts from site operations (e.g. construction or maintenance of the infrastructure) are unavoidable.

Information about how to achieve these outcomes can be found in the Koala Sensitive Design Guideline and the Guideline: State Development Assessment Provisions Code 25 – in particular performance outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4.

In addition, it is essential that the requirements of the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and any relevant policy related to translocation and re-location are met. There are legal requirements for how koala habitat can be cleared safely under the *Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017* to ensure clearing minimises the risk of stress, injury or death to koalas. This includes sequential clearing requirements and having an experienced koala spotter on site when clearing occurs. For more information see section 6 of this guideline and sections 10 and 11 of the *Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017*.

## 6.2. Development impacting a KHA (outside a KPA) (Column 3):

Government infrastructure projects **in a KHA** (that are not exempt) will be required to self assess against the requirements of Table 1 Column 3 and must demonstrate that they:

- avoid interfering with koala habitat
- minimise interfering with koala habitat
- mitigate any impacts that *interfering with koala habitat* has on *koala values*; to the best extent possible
- ensure that, where *interfering with koala habitat* results in a *significant residual impact*, an offset is delivered in accordance with the current Environmental Offsets Policy (EOP):
  - OR
    - where the *public sector entity* has a *pre-existing offset*, the offset must be delivered in accordance with the requirements of the current Queensland Environmental Offsets Policy with the exception of the offset site location preferences; or
    - OR
      - for transport infrastructure, as an alternative compensatory action that has been demonstrated to achieve a conservation outcome equal to, or greater than, would otherwise be achieved through the delivery of a land-based offset in accordance with the EOP. This would be determined using the Guideline: *Using expert elicitation to determine conservation outcomes for alternate compensatory action*.
- clear koala habitat trees sequentially and under the guidance of a koala spotter where koala habitat trees have a trunk of a diameter of more than 10cm at 1.3m above the ground.



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Information about how to achieve the avoid and mitigate outcomes can be found in the Koala Sensitive Design Guideline; the Guideline: State Development Assessment Provisions Code 25 – in particular performance outcomes 5; and the Checklist: Assessing environmental offset obligations, Environmental Offsets Act 2014, Avoid and mitigate assessment checklist

(<https://environment.des.qld.gov.au/assets/documents/pollution/management/offsets/avoid-and-mitigateassessment-checklist.docx>).

There are legal requirements for how koala habitat can be cleared safely under the *Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017*. It specifically requires that clearing minimises the risk of stress, injury or death to koalas, that clearing is sequential and that an experienced koala spotter is on site when clearing occurs. For more information see sections 10 and 11 of the *Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017*.

### 6.3. Development impacting a KHA in a KPA (Column 3):

Government infrastructure projects in a Koala Habitat Area and in a KPA (that are not exempt) will be required to self assess against the requirements of Table 2 and must demonstrate that they:

- avoid interfering with koala habitat
- minimise interfering with koala habitat
- mitigate any impacts that *interfering with koala habitat* has on *koala values* to the best extent possible
- ensured that, where *interfering with koala habitat* results in a *significant residual impact*, an offset is delivered:
  - at a 1:6 ratio and otherwise in accordance with the current EOP
  - OR
  - where the *public sector entity* has a *pre-existing offset*, the offset at a 1:6 ratio must be delivered in accordance with the requirements of the current EOP with the exception of the offset site location preferences;
  - OR
  - for transport infrastructure, as an alternative compensatory action that has been demonstrated to achieve a conservation outcome equal to, or greater than, would otherwise be achieved through the delivery of a land-based offset at a 1:6 ratio in accordance with the EOP. This would be determined using the Guideline: *Using expert elicitation to determine conservation outcomes for alternate compensatory action*.
- clear koala habitat trees sequentially and under the guidance of a koala spotter where koala habitat trees have a trunk of a diameter of more than 10cm at 1.3m above the ground.

Information about how to achieve the avoid and mitigate outcomes can be found in the Koala Sensitive Design Guideline; the Guideline: State Development Assessment Provisions Code 25 – in particular performance outcomes 5; and the Checklist: Assessing environmental offset obligations, Environmental Offsets Act 2014. Avoid and mitigate assessment checklist

(<https://environment.des.qld.gov.au/assets/documents/pollution/management/offsets/avoid-and-mitigateassessment-checklist.docx>).

There are legal requirements for how koala habitat can be cleared safely under the Nature Conservation (Koala). The Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017 requires clearing minimises the risk of stress, injury or death to koalas. This includes sequential clearing requirements and having an experienced koala spotter on site when clearing occurs. For more information see sections 10 and 11 of the Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017.

## 7. Calculating Offsets

The Queensland Environmental Offsets Policy includes specific requirements for delivering offsets for koala habitat in SEQ. The Financial Settlement Offsets Calculator reflects these specific requirements for koala habitat in SEQ. The guidance provided below is based on the current offset policy. If the offset policy is amended, then the calculation used by the entity should align with the offset policy current at the time of the project's approval, except where the impacts are on a KHA within a KPA.

An offset for koala habitat in SEQ is calculated based on the number of non-juvenile habitat trees being impacted – that is the number of trees being impacted that are of the genera *Angophora*, *Corymbia*, *Eucalyptus*, *Lophostemon* or *Melaleuca* and that are more than 4m high or have a trunk with a circumference of more than 31.5cm at 1.3m above the ground.

The Financial Settlement Offsets Calculator was designed to calculate the financial settlement offset using hectares. If the project has identified an area of KHA that has been impacted, that can be used. If the project has identified the number of non-juvenile koala habitat trees being impacted it must convert this into an area in hectares. Currently, this is achieved using an average tree density of 250 trees per hectare for koala habitat in SEQ, the total area of impact for a single non-juvenile koala habitat tree in SEQ is taken to be 40m<sup>2</sup> (0.004 ha). Therefore, the impact area in hectares to input into the financial settlement calculator is:

$$\text{Impact Area (ha)} = \text{Number of non-juvenile koala habitat trees being impacted} \times 0.004 \text{ ha}$$

*Note: To use the [Financial Settlement Offsets Calculator](#) to calculate the financial settlement offset payable, the number of non-juvenile koala habitat trees to be impacted must be known and converted into an area (in hectares) by multiplying the number of non-juvenile koala habitat trees by 0.004ha. This conversion provides the 'distinct matter area' that is required to be input into the Financial Settlement Offsets Calculator.*

### 7.1. KHA outside a KPA

For impacts on a KHA outside a KPA, the offset must deliver an offset based on current offset policy settings which currently has a multiplier of 3 (1:3 ratio) and could be delivered as either a land-based offset or a financial settlement offset.

To determine the land size required to deliver a land-based offset, refer to the methodology in the Guide to Determining Habitat Quality which explains how many NJKHT a site has capacity to contain using the regional ecosystems framework and technical descriptions to ascertain densities. This method will assist in determining the area needed of that particular pre-clearing regional ecosystem required of a size and scale capable of containing 3 NJKHTs for every one tree impacted.

To determine the financial settlement offset, use the [financial settlement offset calculator](#) and input the impact area as determined above, and the other relevant information.

There are notes to follow in the Financial Settlement Offsets Calculator. Importantly, the "SEQ Koala Habitat" matter group must be selected. This will apply a multiplier of 3. Statutory land values and therefore administration costs and landholder incentive costs will vary between LGAs so a separate 'section' is needed to enable a separate calculation for each LGA. The calculation is capped at \$230,000 per hectare for impacts in SEQ local government areas. If the cap is not reached, the results from the calculator will show the applicable administration costs and the landholder incentive payment.

### 7.2. KHA inside a KPA

To achieve the 1:6 offset ratio required by the SI Policy for impacts on a KHA within a KPA, a manual calculation will be required if the Financial Settlement Offsets Calculator reaches the \$230,000 cap. You will

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know if the cap is reached when there is no output from the calculator showing the on-ground management costs or the landowner incentive costs.

## **Modified calculation:**

The first step is to run the Financial Settlement Offsets Calculator for the impact which will determine an offset at a 1:3 ratio. If the Financial Settlement Offsets Calculator reaches the \$230,000 cap then you will need to run the calculation manually by following the calculation in Appendix 4 of the EOP section 4.3.10 to determine the on ground management cost, the landholder incentive cost, and the admin cost.

Administration costs are calculated at 25% of the total on-ground cost component of the offset. Given the 1:6 ratio is for one impact, a single admin cost that is 25% of the total on-ground cost is required.

To calculate the financial settlement for the 1:6 ratio, double the first two components of the financial settlement calculation and add 25% of the doubled on-ground management fee:

Financial settlement =

(on ground management x 2) + (landholder incentive x 2) + (admin cost 25% of on ground management costs)

## **Full manual calculation:**

Please refer to Appendix 4 of the Queensland Environmental Offsets Policy to assist with a full manual calculation of an offset at a 1:6 ratio. A worked example is provided using an impact of 40 trees in a KHA in a KPA:

Convert **impact** number of trees to **hectares** –  $40 \times 0.004$  (250 stems/ha) = 0.16ha

Use the multiplier to determine the **offset area** =  $0.16 \times 6 = 0.96$ ha

Inputs:

- LGA Brisbane City Council
- Bioregion South East Queensland
- Subregion Moreton Basin
- DMA area (impact area) 0.16
- Matter group Koala habitat
- Matter SEQ Koala Habitat
- Multiplier 6
- Offset area  $0.16 \times 6 = 0.96$

### **Calculate the total on ground costs:**

Impact Area x multiplier x on ground cost =

$0.16 \times 6 \times \$20,000$  (on ground cost Table 4.5.4) = **\$19,200**

### **Calculate the landholder incentive payment for each section**

= offset section area X LGA statutory land value (for each subregion/LGA pair) (see table 4.5.3 for LGA UV).

=  $(0.16 \times 6 = 0.96) \times 229626 =$  **\$220,440.96**

### **Calculate the administration costs:**

Multiply the total on-ground cost by 25% to derive the administrative cost.

$\$19,200 \times 25\% =$  **\$4,800**

**Financial settlement** at 1:6 = (offset area x on-ground cost per ha) + landholder incentive payment + administrative cost.

**Financial settlement** at 1:6 ratio =  $19,200 + \$220,440.96 + (25\% \text{ of } 19,200 = 4,800) =$  **\$244,440.96**

## 7.3. Alternative (offset) conservation actions for transport infrastructure ONLY

Table 2 of SI Policy 2022 allows for **transport infrastructure** to deliver offsets as an alternate compensatory action, where the alternate compensatory action includes the design, prior to the commencement of impacts, of a management plan that:

- a. demonstrates that the alternate compensatory action will deliver a conservation outcome equal to, or greater than, would otherwise be achieved through the delivery of a land-based offset; and
- b. demonstrates that the alternate compensatory action is based on proven scientific methods and contemporary data; and
- c. involves an assessment of the number of koalas at risk from the development;
- d. demonstrates how individual koala welfare will be managed, i.e. how will koalas be protected during the development.

This is a departure from the current policy for koalas which is very clear about requiring a restoration offset. This option will only be provided to transport infrastructure projects which are less able to avoid impacts to KHA in a KPA given that many transport projects aim to upgrade existing infrastructure and it is not practical to relocate. Importantly, this option is only possible if it can be demonstrated that the alternative actions can achieve at least the same or greater conservation outcome than would a habitat restoration offset of the size and scale etc required under the SI Policy and the Environmental Offsets Policy.

The Guideline for transport infrastructure - Using Expert Elicitation to determine conservation outcomes for alternate compensatory actions; outlines an evidence-based expert elicitation process that may be used by **transport** infrastructure entities accessing this flexibility and inform the management plan. The outcomes of the Expert Elicitation should determine and inform Transport Infrastructure entities if alternative compensatory action(s) will achieve a conservation outcome equal to, or greater than, what would otherwise be achieved through habitat restoration offsets under the SI Policy.

## 8. Information required for the self-assessment

The following advice is prepared with regards to information that may be useful in addressing the SI Policy and should be provided with any Ministerial Infrastructure Designation submitted for a proposed development.

### 8.1. Development description

Please provide a detailed description of the proposed development and a description of the existing site conditions of the proposed development site. In particular, provide:

- Description of the land intended to be developed, including the property address, tenure and real property description of the land; and
- Description of all components of the development, including:
  - proposed boundary lines;
  - any proposed building envelopes including necessary firebreaks;
  - location and area of all infrastructure or treatment zones to be established, modified or demolished, as a result of the proposed development (e.g., structures, driveways, stormwater management systems, water supply, sewerage systems, effluent disposal, utilities, etc.);
  - location and area of proposed tracks, parking, roads, fences, etc.;
  - type and extent of exempted development that will apply as a natural and ordinary consequence;
  - location of areas proposed to be protected and/or rehabilitated;
  - rehabilitation plans for any proposed rehabilitation;
- landscaping plans for any proposed landscaping;

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- how areas proposed to be protected will be protected (e.g., covenant/VDec/nature refuge), who would be covenantee and covenantor and what activities that are proposed to be permissible and prohibited in these areas;
- bushfire management report that details any necessary firebreaks, fire management lines, access tracks or other fire management such as water tanks;
- detailed description of any operational works (e.g., clearing, levelling or filling) required on site including expected timeframes;
- any machinery to be used or stored on the site; and
- staging of the development if applicable; and
- Detailed and appropriately scaled drawings and/or plans which clearly identify the location of proposed development, including:
  - adjacent real property boundaries;
  - adjacent riverbanks, walls, structures, the limit of vegetation, and/or other principal features of the immediate area;
  - any other information required to accurately define the area and to allow the site to be readily identified from the plan; and
  - spatial files of the proposed development footprint and any other relevant areas on the subject site (e.g., kml. or shp. files).

## 8.2. Koala habitat values assessment

Provide a koala habitat values assessment, carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist, to identify koala habitat areas, koala habitat and koala habitat values that exist on site. This assessment is not limited to the extent of mapped KHAs but should consider scattered trees important for habitat connectivity and safe movement. The results of this assessment must be provided with the application and should be used to guide the location, siting, design and phasing of the proposed development to demonstrate avoidance, minimisation and mitigation.

The koala habitat values assessment should:

- Provide a tree survey plan that identifies the location of all native trees on site along with:
  - identification numbers that correspond to each tree;
  - GPS coordinates for each tree;
  - the species of each tree;
  - the height of each tree;
  - the circumference of each tree at 1.3m above the ground;
  - the tree protection zone of each tree;
  - special features that exist on each tree (e.g. hollows (including approximate size), nests, scratches, termitaria, etc.);
  - what tree species utility it has been assigned by Appendix 4 of Spatial modelling for koalas in South East Queensland;
  - if a tree is a koala habitat tree, whether it is a non-juvenile koala habitat tree;

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- whether each tree is inside or outside the mapped koala habitat area; and
- whether each tree is to be retained or removed (noting that trees which could be removed by exempted development created as a natural and ordinary consequence of the development being approved (e.g., firebreaks, fire management lines, access tracks, fences, etc.) are considered trees to be removed).
- Provide the results of an onsite vegetation survey that:
  - identifies the regional ecosystem present onsite generally in accordance with Methodology for surveying and mapping regional ecosystems and vegetation communities in Queensland (noting that if the RE present is different to what is mapped sufficient information will need to be provided to demonstrate that this is the case);
  - the koala suitability ranking assigned to these REs by Appendix 3 of Spatial modelling for koalas in South East Queensland; and
  - describes the condition of the vegetation present (i.e., identifying areas that have been degraded or are of higher condition and the reasoning for this) (see BioCondition and/or Guide to determining terrestrial habitat quality for information on appropriate methodologies);
- Provide the results of onsite koala surveys (in accordance with an appropriate and robust methodology) that identify the use or potential use of koalas (e.g. koala sightings, scats, scratches) (see EPBC Act referral guidelines for the vulnerable koala for information on appropriate survey methodologies).
- Provide the result of a koala habitat connectivity value assessment for the site and surrounding areas (see the Koala-sensitive design guideline and EPBC Act referral guidelines for the vulnerable koala for information on how to undertake a suitable assessment).
- Provide the results of an existing threats to koala assessment (see the Koala-sensitive design guideline and EPBC Act referral guidelines for the vulnerable koala and Guide to determining terrestrial habitat quality for information on how to undertake a suitable assessment).

### 8.3. Impacts to koala habitat areas

A key requirement in addressing the SI Policy is a detailed assessment of the potential impacts to koala habitat and the measures taken to avoid, minimise and mitigate those impacts through planning, design and other measures.

Using the results of the koala habitat values assessment, an assessment of the potential impacts to koala habitat should demonstrate:

- that the development will result in the retention of all koala habitat area on site (avoid); or
- if complete avoidance is not reasonably possible, that alternative development options have been considered to retain all koala habitat area but were not reasonably possible (avoid); and
- if complete avoidance is not reasonably possible, that alternative development options have been considered and the proposed development will result in the smallest impact on koala habitat area reasonably possible through location, siting, design and phasing of the proposed development with consideration to the results of the koala habitat values assessment (minimise); and
- if complete avoidance is not reasonably possible, measures are proposed to mitigate impacts on koala habitat values.

In documenting and assessing the potential impacts on koala habitat a development proposal should:

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- include direct and indirect impacts to koala habitat (i.e., direct impacts from proposed infrastructure and indirect impacts from exempted development created as a result of the development including fire management lines, firebreaks, fences, access tracks, etc.);
- discuss the alternative designs that were considered to minimise and mitigate impacts to koala habitat and koala habitat values along with justification for why development options that result in no or less impact on koala habitat areas and koala habitat values were determined to not be reasonably possible. Include:
  - the extent of impact from each alternative design (area in hectares and number of non-juvenile koala habitat trees);
  - justification of how the proposed design minimises impacts to koala habitat to the greatest extent possible (reference results of koala habitat values assessment);
  - details of the type, location and design of any proposed koala-sensitive design measures (reference results of koala habitat values assessment); and
  - details on any proposed rehabilitation and/or protection of retained habitat.

Consider how construction activities can be designed to avoid impacts on retained habitat and koalas injury.

The following should be considered in developing strategies to avoid, minimise and mitigate potential impacts on koala habitat:

- The avoid and mitigate checklist;
- The siting, design, time of day/year, duration of activity which can reduce impacts;
- Placing unavoidable impacts in areas of the site that provide the lowest koala habitat values (e.g., lowest value RE, lowest vegetation condition, lowest value tree species, less connectivity, more threats, less evidence of usage);
- Using building envelopes to reduce impacts to koala habitat;
- Building up instead of out (i.e., multi-storey dwellings with smaller footprints opposed to single-storey dwellings with larger footprints);
- Reducing impacts associated with required fire management through siting and design of the development - for example locate a building with sufficient fire breaks around it in existing cleared areas on the site, not abutting habitat that would later need to be cleared for fire break;
- Mitigating impacts on koala habitat values by:
  - retaining sufficient koala habitat in locations that will allow koalas to use and move through the site;
  - improving degraded koala habitat that is to be retained on the site by removing weeds and planting koala food trees endemic to the site; protecting koala habitat proposed to be retained through covenants or similar;
  - considering koala breeding and movement peaks when planning the timing of construction activities.
- minimising impacts on retained habitat and koalas using the area by:
  - providing a buffer between development and any retained koala habitat; and/or
  - managing edge effects on retained koala habitat including:
    - changes in soil condition, such as nutrients and erosion;
    - altered hydrological flow;
    - the introduction or increase of weed and exotic plant species;

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- disturbances to vegetation;
  - a modified fire regime;
  - the introduction of predators to koalas; and
  - increased light, noise or dust.
- Incorporating koala sensitive design into the development (see Koala-sensitive design guideline).

## 8.4. Fragmentation, connectivity and safe koala movement

It is preferred that koala habitat areas are not fragmented as a result of the proposed development and that vegetated or cleared areas between patches of koala habitat areas, which act as corridors, 'stepping stones' or unimpeded areas for koala movement, are maintained. If this cannot be achieved, justification for this will need to be provided along with alternative solutions to provide connectivity and safe koala movement. Justification for why the alternative solutions are considered to be appropriate will also need to be provided.

An assessment of the existing connectivity values and safe koala movement opportunities should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist, along with the connectivity values and safe koala movement opportunities that will remain because of the proposed development.

The Koala-sensitive design guideline provides useful information on how to assess connectivity values for koala movement and ways to ensure safe koala movement opportunities are incorporated into the siting, design, construction and operation of proposed development. Please note that in most instances, a range of measures will need to be utilised to ensure safe koala movement is incorporated into a development.

The assessment should be contained in a report, prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist that:

- provides an assessment of the existing connectivity values and safe koala movement opportunities that currently exist on the site (pre-development);
- identifies the locations of koala habitat areas within the development site and highly connected koala habitat areas;
- demonstrates how connectivity will be maintained by retaining existing connectivity and/or identified corridors including:
  - the dimensions of the area (e.g., length by width) proposed to be retained to avoid fragmenting koala habitat areas;
  - the composition on the area retained (e.g., does the area contain remnant or regrowth vegetation, what are the flora species in the retained area, does it contain koala habitat area, other native or non-native vegetation, is the area cleared, what is the location and distance between koala habitat areas or individual tree);
  - any actions that will be undertaken on land retained to avoid fragmenting koala habitat areas that will improve connectivity between koala habitat areas (e.g., removing barriers, revegetating with koala habitat trees, the density of plantings, the distance between planted trees, encouraging natural revegetation, incorporating principles of koala-sensitive design (described in the Koala-sensitive design guideline));
  - elevation and slope or areas to be retained to avoid fragmenting koala habitat areas;
  - the location of waterways and waterbodies in relation to areas retained to avoid fragmenting koala habitat areas;
  - management actions to ensure corridor functionality is maintained as anticipated: and



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- discussion on why those areas are suitable for maintaining connectivity for koala movement (with consideration to the points mentioned on page 11 of the State Code 25 Guideline); and
- identifies barriers to safe koala movement within and between highly connected patches of koala habitat area that will be introduced by the development (e.g., clearing, constructing fences, retaining walls, pools, roads, dogs etc.);
- outlines measures that will be undertaken to ensure koalas can move safely within and between highly connected patches of koala habitat area;
- provides justification for why the proposed measures are suitable for providing safe koala movement opportunities; and
- provides an assessment of the connectivity values and safe koala movement opportunities that would exist on the site post-development.

## 8.5. Koala safety from construction activities

To ensure the safety of koalas during construction and operations of the proposed infrastructure a management plan should be prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist, that identifies the following:

- all potential risks to koalas from clearing and construction activities proposed on site including clearing, earthworks, civil works and building works;
- all management measures that will be implemented to address those risks;
- the process and measures to address accidental injury or death of koalas; and
- the process for implementing the management plan including:
  - identifying the person responsible for implementing the plan (e.g., site supervisor, foreman); and
  - the process for training all contractors working on the site to comply with the plan; and
  - how compliance with the clearing requirements of the Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017 will be complied with.

## 8.6. Removal and relocation of koalas

The Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017 seeks to reduce the need to remove and relocate koalas because of clearing events by implementing clearing requirements that allow for koalas to disperse from the clearing site without human intervention.

Under the existing policy, proactive translocation of koalas is only permitted under a Scientific Purposes Permit issued under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* where the program is conducted by a recognised research institution under appropriate animal ethics standards, including monitoring of the dispersal and survival of individual animals.

DES considers that the relocation of koalas is only one element of a more comprehensive response required in these circumstances. It is therefore recommended that government entities consider the development and implementation of a management plan for sites which contain significant areas of koala habitat and koala records. The management plan should detail:

- measures to avoid, minimise and mitigate impacts to koala habitat areas and non-juvenile koala habitat trees to the greatest extent possible and in doing so maximise the retention of koala habitat on site;

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- measures to offset any significant residual impacts to koala habitat areas and non-juvenile koala habitat trees where it is determined that the impact and offset is a suitable outcome and a conservation outcome can be achieved by the offset;
- site design considerations to avoid fragmentation and provide for connectivity and safe koala movement opportunities;
- provision of food, shelter and movement opportunities for koalas in site landscaping;
- koala sensitive design to be incorporated into the site design in accordance with the Koala Sensitive Design Guideline;
- measures to be taken during all construction (i.e., clearing, earth works, building works, etc.) to not increase the risks to koalas and vegetation marked for retention including:
  - identifying all potential risks to koalas from clearing and construction activities proposed on site;
  - identifying all potential risks to vegetation to be retained from clearing and construction activities proposed on site;
  - outlining all management measures that will be implemented to address those risks;
- the process and measures to address accidental injury or death of koalas; and
- the process for implementing the management plan including:
  - identifying the person responsible for implementing the plan (e.g., site supervisor, foreman); and
  - the process for training all contractors working on the site to comply with the plan; and
  - proposed approach to ensuring compliance with the clearing requirements prescribed in section 10 and 11 of the Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017; and
  - contingencies to both minimise and respond to direct impacts on individual koalas during construction. This could potentially include contingencies for both the take and relocation of koalas in imminent danger and deliberate translocation under appropriate authorities under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 where such action was supported by independent experts.

The proposed Koala Management Plans would seek to maintain, as far as possible, opportunities for the natural dispersal and movement of koalas while outlining a range of alternative actions that would both support the persistence of koala populations in the local landscape and minimise the potential impacts on any individuals displaced by the clearing. This would also align with the requirements under the SI Policy.

## 9. Requirements under the Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017

There are also a number of independent clearing requirements prescribed in the Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017 (Koala Conservation Plan). Unlike the requirements in the Planning Regulation 2017, which are in place to protect koala habitat, the requirements in the Koala Conservation Plan are in place to prevent koalas being injured or killed during clearing. I have detailed these requirements below.

***Please note: These requirements apply irrespective of any approval or exemption provided under other pieces of legislation.***

### Sequential clearing requirements

Under section 10 of the Koala Conservation Plan it is a requirement that clearing of koala habitat trees (as defined below) in koala district A (which this property is in) must comply with the following sequential clearing conditions:

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- Clearing of the koala habitat trees is carried out in a way that ensures koalas on the area being cleared (the clearing site) have enough time to move out of the clearing site without human intervention;
- When clearing sites with an area of more than 3ha:
  - the clearing must be carried out in stages;
  - where the clearing site is 6ha or less, no more than 50% of the clearing site can be cleared in any one stage;
  - where the clearing site is more than 6ha, no more than 3ha or 3% of the clearing site (whichever is the greater) can be cleared in any one stage;
  - there must be at least one period of 12 hours (starting at 6pm on one day and ending at 6am on the following day) between each stage during which no trees are cleared on the site;
- While the clearing is being carried out, the clearing of the koala habitat trees must be carried out in a way that ensures appropriate habitat links are maintained within the clearing site and between the clearing site and adjacent area, to allow koalas living on the site to move out of the site;
- No koala habitat trees in which a koala is present is to be cleared; and
- No koala habitat trees with a crown overlapping a tree in which a koala is present is to be cleared.

## ***Koala habitat trees means –***

- (a) A tree of the *Corymbia*, *Melaleuca*, *Lophostemon* or *Eucalyptus* genera that is edible by koalas; or
- (b) A tree of a type typically used by koalas for shelter, including, for example, a tree of the *Angophora* genus.

## Koala spotter requirements

Under Section 11 of the Koala Conservation Plan it is a requirement that clearing of koala habitat trees (as defined above) in koala habitat areas that have a trunk diameter of more than 10cm at 1.3m above the ground must be undertaken in the presence of a koala spotter who has the primary role of locating koalas in the trees.

***Koala spotter*** means a person who has qualifications and experience, or demonstrated skills and knowledge in locating koalas in koala habitat or conducting arboreal fauna surveys.

## **10. Further information to assist assessment**

### **10.1. Protected plants**

The *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (the Act) regulates the clearing of native plants in Queensland to protect our critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable and near threatened plants

If an approved activity will involve clearing native plants 'in the wild' (e.g. in bushland), it is necessary to determine which clearing requirements under the Act will need to be complied with. The requirements may include obtaining a flora survey and/or a protected plant clearing permit, and will apply even if an area is Category X under the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* (the Vegetation Act).

Further information to assist entities to assess the clearing requirements that apply to their specific circumstance and advice of how to apply for a permit, if required, can be found at <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/plants/protected-plants/clearing>

Where clearing is proposed within a high risk area, it is a requirement under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* to conduct a flora survey in accordance with the *Flora Survey Guidelines – Protected Plants* (<https://environment.des.qld.gov.au/licences-permits/plants-animals/documents/gl-wl-pp-flora-survey.pdf>) to determine if there are any protected plants on the clearing site. If protected plants are found on the clearing site, a clearing permit under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* may be required. Additionally, if a protected plant is known or found in the clearing site, a clearing permit under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* may be required.

More information on the clearing of protected plants can be found here:

<https://environment.des.qld.gov.au/licences-permits/plants-animals/protected-plants/index.html>. If you have any specific questions relating to the protected plant framework contact the Department of Environment and

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Science's Permits and Licence Management team – P: 1300 130 372 (and select option four) E: palm@des.qld.gov.au.

## 10.2. Protected animal breeding places

Records of protected animal (i.e., animals that are listed as extinct, endangered, vulnerable, near threatened, and least concern) exist on and within proximity to each of the site. For this reason, it is advised that development that involves tampering with a protected animal breeding place may require a species management program.

More information on protected animal breeding places and species management programs can be found here <https://environment.des.qld.gov.au/licences-permits/plants-animals/species-management-program>. If you have any specific questions relating to species management programs contact the Department of Environment and Science's Permits and Licence Management team – P: 1300 130 372 (and select option four) E: palm@des.qld.gov.au.

## 10.3. Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation 1999 Act referrals

Any of the sites which contain significant koala habitat and or other matters of national environmental significance listed under Commonwealth legislation may require referral under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation 1999* (EPBC Act). It is advised that you seek advice from the Commonwealth Government on whether the proposed development should be referred under the EPBC Act.

## 10.4. Legislative provisions

The following legislation and instruments provide authority for this operational policy:

- *Nature Conservation Act 1992*
- Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017 (“Koala Conservation Plan”).
- *Planning Act 2016*
- *Planning Regulation 2017*
- *Environmental Offsets Act 2014*
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Commonwealth)

## 10.5. Related documents

The following policies and procedural guideline documents contain information relevant to the assessment and management of potential impacts on koala habitat arising from state supported infrastructure projects

- [State Government Supported Infrastructure – Koala Conservation Policy](#)
- [State Development Assessment Provisions – State Code 25: Development in South East Queensland koala habitat areas](#)
- [Guideline: State Development Assessment Provisions State Code 25: Development in South East Queensland koala habitat areas](#)
- [The Koala-sensitive Design Guideline: A guide to koala-sensitive design measures for planning and development activities.](#)
- [Queensland Environmental Offsets Policy - Significant Residual Impact Guideline -Nature Conservation Act 1992, Environmental Protection Act 1994, Marine Parks Act 2004](#)

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## Disclaimer

While this document has been prepared with care it contains general information and does not profess to offer legal, professional or commercial advice. The Queensland Government accepts no liability for any external decisions or actions taken on the basis of this document. Persons external to the Department of Environment and Science should satisfy themselves independently by consulting their own professional advisors before undertaking any course of action.

## Approved by



Signature

6 June 2023

Date

Deputy Director General  
Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and  
Partnerships

**Enquiries:**  
Koala Assessment & Compliance  
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## Version History:

Version	Effective date	Comments
1.00	3/11/2021	
2.00	6/06/2023	Prepared to complement the SI Policy 2023 which aligns with the koala planning regulations 2020