



KOALA KOALITION
ECONETWORK PORT STEPHENS INC.

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20/6/23

To: The General Manager, Port Stephens Council

Re: DA 16-2023-196-1, 16 Trotter Road, Bobs Farm – Ingenia Natura

This submission indicates KKEPS gives in principle support for the proposed boardwalk around the dam at the north west corner of Ingenia's Natura development at 16 Trotter Rd, Bobs Farm.

We note that suggestions made by KKEPS during consultations with Ingenia staff have been included in the boardwalk development application; including limiting the built form of the boardwalk to two-sides of the dam (west and north), implementing appropriate koala safety measures, and planting local native grass, sedge, and rush species relevant to the PCT along the water's edge.

KKEPS queries the choice of concrete for the path surface in the natural area surrounding the dam. While the need for a hard surface to support user mobility and access is understood, KKEPS recommends consideration of alternative, more permeable surface treatments and profiles for the path, to support soil ecology and plant health. KKEPS is concerned that path construction could also cause damage to the roots and structures of the few mature trees retained in the slim koala corridor surrounding the dam.

If the proponent finds after further consideration that concrete is needed for some sections of the path, we recommend reducing impervious surfaces in other areas in compensation. For example, the artificial turf in front of the community centre could be replaced with low-growing local native ground-cover plants, which grow thickly for weed suppression and can be walked upon.

We note that no lighting plans were submitted for the boardwalk or path, indicating that artificial lighting is not planned for these areas. KKEPS supports this and requests that any lighting in areas nearby should conform with the new [National Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife - DCCEEW](#) updated in May 2023.

The Environmental Mitigation Table for Boardwalk Construction in the MJD Environmental assessment incorrectly cites Hunter Wildlife Rescue 0418 628 483 or 0418NATIVE as contact details in case any wildlife are injured. Hunter Wildlife does not cover Bobs Farm. The appropriate (overlapping) local wildlife rescue organisations are Port Stephens Koala Hospital and Wildlife in Need of Care. The territory maps for wildlife organisations are available here [Licensed wildlife](#)



The attached KKEPS information sheet for koalas should be referred to instead: **Recognising a sick koala and calling for rescue**. Please note that Port Stephens Koala Hospital now holds licences to rescue and rehabilitate other species such as birds, possums and reptiles.

KKEPS also notes that this DA 16-2023-196-1 has been given a new application number rather than a modification of the existing DA number. There was no mention of DA 16-2007-15 [1-9] in the Related Applications section of the PSC DA Tracker for this DA, though documents from the other DA were mentioned as part of the submission. For example:

- the Ecological Assessment for DA 16-2023-196-1 noted that the ‘advice must be read in conjunction with the approved ecological assessment prepared by MJD Environmental that informed approval of DA 16-2007-15 and relevant modifications.’ As the public doesn’t have access to those earlier documents once public submissions close, there may be context in those documents that have a bearing on this DA. It would have been preferable to review a full exhibition of related relevant information.
- The Concept Master Plan proposed to be approved with this DA, ref 240060-DA-002-K, includes changes outside the boardwalk area that would apply to DA 16-2007-15 [for example, the wash bay, changed area for the sewer pump area, and changed area for stormwater basin on the northeast side of the site.]
- There are also conditions of consent under DA 16-2007-15-8 that apply equally to DA 16-2023-196-1.

KKEPS is concerned that the separation of the two DAs through different numbering could create confusion rather than clarity of decision-making, and a need to sync both the context and conditions of consent across the two DAs going forward.

KKEPS believes that the substance of DA 16-2023-196-1 should be treated as a modification of DA 16-2007-15 if possible, rather than a new DA. Rather than listing here all the conditions of consent from DA 16-2007-15-8 that apply to this new DA, we would appreciate the opportunity to review proposed conditions of consent for this DA before it proceeds to final determination.

In summary, KKEPS supports in principle the proposed boardwalk around the dam with the following conditions:

1. KKEPS recommends consideration of alternative, more permeable surface treatments and profiles for the path not to be concrete, to support soil ecology and plant health. KKEPS is especially concerned that construction of a concrete path could cause damage to the roots and structures of the few mature trees retained in the slim koala corridor surrounding the dam. If concrete is approved, appropriate tree protection measures should be included for the path location and its surface and subsurface structure, to protect existing trees to be retained as well as new trees to be planted in the surrounding area.
2. If concrete is used for the pathway, KKEPS recommends compensation by reducing impervious surfaces in other areas, such replacing the artificial turf in front of the community centre with native ground-cover plants.
3. The proposed lighting for the whole site should conform with the National Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife, updated in May 2023. KKEPS recommends no lighting be provided for the boardwalk at night, to facilitate nocturnal wildlife movement, as intended.
4. The attached information sheet for koalas should be referred to during and post construction: **Recognising a sick koala and calling for rescue.**
5. Should this DA 16-2023-196-1 proceed while numbered separately from DA 16-2007-15, KKEPS would appreciate the opportunity to review and provide input into the proposed conditions of consent before final determination.

I have not made any political donations.

Yours sincerely,

Carmel Northwood

Convenor

0422225437

Recognising a sick koala and calling for rescue



Koalas need to be rescued and taken into care if they have signs of injury or disease, are orphaned, or are in an unsuitable environment, eg where there are no food trees.

A healthy koala should have a pink chin, a dry white rump, no discharge from the eyes, ears, nose or mouth, and not be bleeding or limping.

Sick koalas often come to the ground and sit hunched over at the base of a tree or stay low in a tree for long periods (for days). Koalas should naturally move away from humans, not allowing themselves to be touched or petted.

Koalas can climb even with fractured/broken bones while adrenaline is running. If a koala has been seen to be hit by a car or bitten by a dog, do not let it climb up and get away before it can be rescued.

A dog bite can be fatal if the wound is not cleaned and antibiotics given to prevent infection.

Koalas do not bleed profusely, so the wound/s may not be obvious. Deadly but invisible internal wounds can be caused if the koala is picked up and shaken by a dog.

Chlamydia is the most common disease in koalas. It can be fatal if not treated with antibiotics. Two signs of chlamydia, indicating that treatment is necessary are:

- If the koala's rump is wet and stained dark brown/black due to 'wet bottom'.
- If the koala's eyes are crusty or gunky with pus, or red and inflamed.

If a rescue is needed, or you need help in determining this, please call the **Port Stephens Koala Hospital** rescue number immediately, at any time of the day or night.

1800 PS Koalas / 1800 775 625

To keep a sick or injured koala calm, cover it with a laundry basket, box or even a large towel or blanket, or jacket. If the koala is not contained, only covered, it will escape easily if you don't keep pressure on the container to secure it. Do not leave it alone.

Do not attempt to pick a koala up and hold them like a child. Wild koalas bite hard and their long claws scratch deeply.

Put the koala in a quiet place, away from pets (dogs especially), noisy people and machinery, if possible, while you wait for the rescuer to arrive.



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