

Speech to NSW Planning Commission re Modification to Kings Forest
Residential Subdivision Koala Plan of Management (Mod 4) D544-18

The Reverend Hilary Singleton

Koalas are a global icon that represent Australia. The Commonwealth Games held on the Gold Coast used a koala as its signature mascot. Millions of people around the world watched that koala which symbolized the essence of our unique fauna. But, in the harsher world of development at Kings Forest we have no confidence that the agreed strategies will be met to protect our critically endangered koalas; we have to fight for them.

At King's Forest every requirement and condition that was agreed to in the approved Koala Plan of Management that was a key part of the development approval must be met if our koalas have any chance of survival. And, not just to survive but to thrive and grow.

I am part of a church group in Kingscliff that bakes cakes to raise funds so that we can raise awareness of the threats to our small koala population. We care passionately about their survival. Will their future be secured or will our grandchildren have to go to a zoo to see a koala?

The time and place for comprehensive, binding action for their preservation is NOW at King's Forest;

- Access roads passing through Environmental Protection Zones must be constructed with underpasses to allow koalas' safe passage to food trees. Fences built without underpasses prevent wildlife movements resulting in starvation and death.
- Similarly, any fencing that cuts off the Cudgen Paddock (golf course) will have the same result. As part of a wildlife corridor it must be kept open for access to food.
- Koalas need an absolutely binding agreement that the 27 hectares of offset food tree planting will be identified locally, approved and commenced prior to the commencement of any construction.

We will not rest until everything above is included in the Koala Plan of Management. We have one, golden opportunity to get this right. It must be done!

