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Response to Kings Forest revised PoM modification P08/0194 mod4

The Caldera Environment Centre welcomes the opportunity to comment on Kings Forest PoM Mod 4.

It is extremely frustrating and disappointing that there are still modifications required of the developer to minimise environmental consequences and ensure sound outcomes to ensure the Tweed Coast Koala population persists into the future.

CEC and the broader community rightly expect developers to minimise poor environmental outcomes. The Kings Forest development will have a major impact on the Tweed Coast and the developer should feel obligated to abide by agreed conditions that particularly will protect the resident koala population.

There are four major areas of concern for CEC;

1. The developer needs to commit to the original proposal to a 27ha offset and on no account should this obligation be converted to paying into the BCT fund. Should there be insufficient areas in Cudgen Nature Reserve then additional land within Kings Forest be included. We propose that areas adjacent to Cudgen Nature Reserve within Kings Forest be used for part of the offset.

The offset should provide appropriate compensatory habitat and feed trees for the resident Koala population and the commitment made before works commence. Critical habitat is being lost and impacts increased with the development so the only course of action is improving existing habitat by enhancement and expansion.

2. We also do not support relocating fauna fencing to include the golf course. This makes no sense as koalas will obviously benefit from having access to this green space and we can see no disadvantage to the development. It also helps protect wildlife from any roving dogs, a major threat in the urban fringe. It's essential there is strong demarcation between urban areas and open space and bushland. The golf course would be an ecological asset and the opportunity to revegetate part of 'The Wallum Sandplain (Cudgen Paddock) should be included.

3. Off leash areas for dog owners is a growing issue for Tweed residents. The developer needs to provide sufficient appropriate space within the development for its residents to exercise their dogs and not rely on open space already under pressure from dog walkers.

4. Fencing and underpass plans may have been put in place but threats by vehicles moving along haul roads during construction need to be addressed.

There are other operational conditions that require the developer to amend as per previous submission. CEC can see no reason for these changes not to be made. They all benefit the developer with negative consequences for the environment. CEC would like to see the developer address community concerns which will result in a positive outcome for the Tweed Coast Koala population.

Cynthia Brook
Secretary