

**Submission
No 234**

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT CONSENTS IN NSW

Name: Mrs Dale Viola

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Submission for Zombie DA's

My name is Dale Viola, I am a volunteer with Friends of the Koala in the northern rivers of NSW. I am a rescuer and rehabilitator of sick, injured and orphaned koalas with the above not for profit organisation.

I am grateful for the opportunity to make a submission on the Historical Development Consents NSW.

My key concerns with the existing historical development applications is the impact they have on the existing habitat of koalas in the northern rivers, and, in fact, anywhere else that Zombie Developments affect koala populations.

One of my major concerns is the effect on koalas in the proposed Wallum Estate development at Brunswick Heads. The proponent, Clarence Properties, intends to completely remove 103 critical koala food trees and intends plans to replace these with 54 saplings. These saplings would take at least 20-30 years to reach a point where they could provide sufficient habitat and food source for the existing koalas that use the Wallum heathland either as a home ground or a corridor to reach other areas of habitation.

Koalas are seen as an umbrella species, so it follows that protecting this habitat for the koalas also protects other vulnerable and endangered fauna and flora.

Recent bushfires and continuing habitat loss has had a huge deficit impact on the nation's koala populations, rendering them to be officially listed as an Endangered Species.

In fact, I believe that the koala populations east of the nation's M1 highway should be upgraded as Critically Endangered. In my experience these koalas are on a precipice leading to extinction of some areas. Should developments such as the Wallum Estate be allowed to continue this will only exacerbate the situation in this area.

The majority of these DA's would likely not meet the current planning laws under the EP & A Act and I believe that changes could be made to the law to address these problems by clarifying the circumstances in which a historical development is considered to have lapsed requiring the Development Application to be reviewed for current approval.

Environment and planning laws in NSW should be improved to ensure that the environment is given protection and to ensure that environmental assessment addresses the cumulative impacts of biodiversity loss associated with all developments.

An urgent moratorium is called for now on all zombie DA's as it is too late to reverse the biodiversity loss after the development has been allowed to proceed.

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to make this submission on behalf of the local koala population, which does not have a voice it would seem.

Dale Viola
Volunteer Rescuer & Carer