

**Submission  
No 278**

**INQUIRY INTO KOALA POPULATIONS AND HABITAT IN  
NEW SOUTH WALES**

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Environment Protection Policies Overrun by GILEAD;

TEC believes the controversial development of Gilead by Lendlease for housing in western Sydney has breached a number of key policies and should be curtailed. Clearing works have just begun. The policies involve fundamental provisions for biocertification, retention of tree canopy and conservation of koalas. We hear a lot about better quality development – but can government actually implement it?

Works are about to begin to remove trees. This flies in the face of the government's commitment to increase Sydney's tree canopy. Clearly removal of mature trees is not replicated in canopy by saplings. Urban heat issues will inevitably be exacerbated for the development and new residents. Onsite biobanks setup to compensate for the loss of Koala habitat have been zoned public recreation not environmental so that they could use them to put in hydraulic infrastructure. Biobanks will be significantly degraded over time, rather than be sustainable sites as envisaged by the legislation.

The development has also used the existing adjacent Noorumba bush reserves for koala credits rather than protecting new areas. This is in contravention of the Commonwealth EPBC requirements.

Lendlease will build the Appin Road upgrade alongside their site with an exclusion fence and no east-west crossovers for Koalas. This aims to deliberately exclude Koalas from Gilead, in effect a 'local extinction plan'. It will even stop Koalas accessing biobanks put aside for them by Lendlease. It will also see in time the removal of existing Koalas from Beulah and other biobanking sites that were meant to provide Koala's safe refuge.

It does not appear the Koala Management Plan has been completed and required conservation actions have not been concluded prior to development. Without enforceable, pre-emptive rules – so-called protections will be whittled away over time.

What are environment protection policies worth if major development can override them in the rush for sprawling development? We know – stupid question. Gilead is another reminder that councils, government agencies, ministers and developers need to lift their game – and we won't stop telling them.

Please reconsider the development of Mt Gilead a valuable heritage and wildlife area if out state.

Regards

Sharlene Smith