

**Submission
No 35**

**INQUIRY INTO LOCAL LAND SERVICES AMENDMENT
(MISCELLANEOUS) BILL 2020**

Name: Mr Nick Gardiner

Date Received: 22 February 2021

To whom it may concern,

I own & operate a farm in the Liverpool Plains, just outside of the town of Gunnedah.

I have been watching the developments in relation to the proposed Koala SEPP with absolute amazement. I can not believe how removed from the realities of the bush the proposals are, & view them to be an offence to hard working farmers (& taxpayers). I view this to be yet another case of small noisy interests exerting their will on the the largely silent majority.

My broad position is in complete agreement with the advice of NSW Farmers (my rep industry body), & accordingly i reproduce a summary of their key submissions below;

1. Planning instruments like the Koala SEPP are designed for urban and peri urban areas, and do not take into account how agricultural land and agi-business is conducted
2. Private landholders manage the majority of the landscape of NSW, and in doing so protect koalas and other vulnerable species from fire and pests. The SEPP will stop the ability of land owners to manage their land and put koalas in a more vulnerable position
3. The SEPP can turn off the land management code, causing significant interruption to farming businesses and preventing activities such as thinning that protect koalas. No assessment has been done to understand the extent of this damage to agriculture.
4. The SEPP relies on the theoretical location of tree species to define habitat of koalas, and in doing so can quarantine land from agriculture for no reason when koalas are not there, but may have been 18 years ago. It is untenable to bring in a regulation of land without knowing which land it will effect, and to what extent.
5. The governments' reforms to the LLS Act and with the Biodiversity Conservation Act in 2016, provide both incentive to protect koalas, and protection through strong laws
6. Decoupling the Koala SEPP from the LLS act retains these strong measures to foster koala survival and regulate their management without harming productivity
7. Good environmental outcomes rely on participation by land owners not prohibition by Government.
8. To assist koala populations, the knowledge and experience of rural land owners should be used, and complimented by incentive and education, not by locking up productive land.

Could you please ensure that my objection to the SEPP in its current form is recognised, & encourage you to balance the interests of hardworking farmers with those of the special interest groups.

Thanks in advance