



Department of
Environment and Conservation (NSW)

In reply please quote: MOF14678

Ms K [REDACTED]

Dear Ms [REDACTED]

I refer to your recent letter to the Minister for the Environment, the Hon Bob Debus MP, regarding the presence of koalas at the ADI site, St Marys. I have been asked to reply on the Minister's behalf.

The Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) believes it is very unlikely that there is a resident koala population at the ADI site. Koalas are high profile iconic species that tend to be reported when seen. There has been a large number of people working at the site in recent years, including those conducting an intensive flora and fauna survey. Although the survey was primarily aimed at other species, koalas would have almost certainly have already been observed had they been present. Despite the fact that there are over 4000 homes and businesses within five kilometres of the site, there have been less than ten reported koala sightings in the area, mostly unsubstantiated, in the past 20 years. The only conclusion that can be drawn from the available data is that there is no resident koala population, but that the occasional koala may pass through the site.

Consequently, there are no plans for the DEC to conduct koala surveys across the entire site. Nevertheless, in those parts of the ADI site where development may occur in the future, many of the individual developments will require the preparation of a species impact statement. Where this is the case, the DEC will require developers to conduct such surveys as part of this process. In fact, Lend Lease has already requested the Director General's requirements for at least one species impact statement, and the DEC's requirements include a request for a koala survey and assessment to be undertaken in accordance with published scientific methods.

It should also be emphasised that the planning process for the ADI site has resulted in the conservation of between 850 and 900 hectares of land, containing endangered ecological communities and threatened species, and this includes the vast majority of the vegetation likely to comprise potential koala habitat.

Yours sincerely

ROSS CARTER
Director, Metropolitan
Environment Protection and Regulation Division