



Photo: Annie McKellar

## Koala Beach: a model for Koala-friendly development

Residents in Australia's only koala-friendly urban development say *'living amongst wildlife and respecting nature makes us richer and happier'*.

The Koala-friendly urban design principles in place at Pottsville's Koala Beach development have also had a profoundly beneficial impact on the environment as a whole.

Not only do local residents perceive their environment as being richer and more diverse in native wildlife, this perception has been confirmed by an assessment of biodiversity at Koala Beach.

[www.savethekoala.com](http://www.savethekoala.com)

## " Koala Beach demonstrates it is possible to build houses while minimising our impact on local Koala populations."

This outstanding development, conceived in 1994 by the Australian Koala Foundation (AKF) in partnership with the Ray Group (a Gold Coast based developer), proves a Koala Protection Act could shape, rather than prevent, development.

Koala Beach is now home to 500 residential properties. The site was home to not just Koalas, but also 25 species of endangered or rare flora and fauna, each protected under the initiatives in place at Koala Beach.



After 20 years of development, Koalas still live in safety at Koala Beach. We can go out and find the descendants of Koalas that lived at the site back in 1993.

Council and Koala Hospital records have indicated very little evidence that two key Koala threats associated with development - cars and dogs - had affected the local population.

During the 2011 Senate Inquiry, Koala Beach was identified by the Property Council of Australia as a model for successful restoration of Koala habitat, and the 'coexistence of wildlife and humans.'<sup>1</sup> Why then hasn't that model been replicated anywhere else in the Country?

### Koala Protection Act

Koala Beach demonstrates it is possible to build houses under a Koala Protection Act (KPA) while minimising our impact on local Koala populations.

## The principles behind Koala Beach

Key elements of the Koala Beach estate include:

- 1) the retention of the majority of Koala Habitat on the site (the total area of the estate is approximately 365 hectares, and nearly 272 hectares has been devoted to environmental protection),
- 2) rehabilitation works, including planting a Koala food tree on the footpath outside each residence,
- 3) a prohibition on dogs and cats on the estate,
- 4) measures to mitigate against the impact of traffic through the estate (warning signage, speed bumps),
- 5) fencing restrictions (a gap of 30cm is required at the bottom of all non-pool fences, to allow animals to move freely through the estate), and
- 6) the establishment of a management committee (funded through a resident levy) to manage the implementation of conservation initiatives.

<sup>1</sup> Property Council of Australia (Residential Development Council). 2011 Response to question taken on notice from the Senate Inquiry into the status, health and sustainability of Australia's

Koala population (from public hearing, Canberra 19 May 2011). <https://senate.aph.gov.au/submissions/comitees/viewdocument.aspx?id=f46df8ad-7d00-4e51-800c-1f77d7fc5d9f>