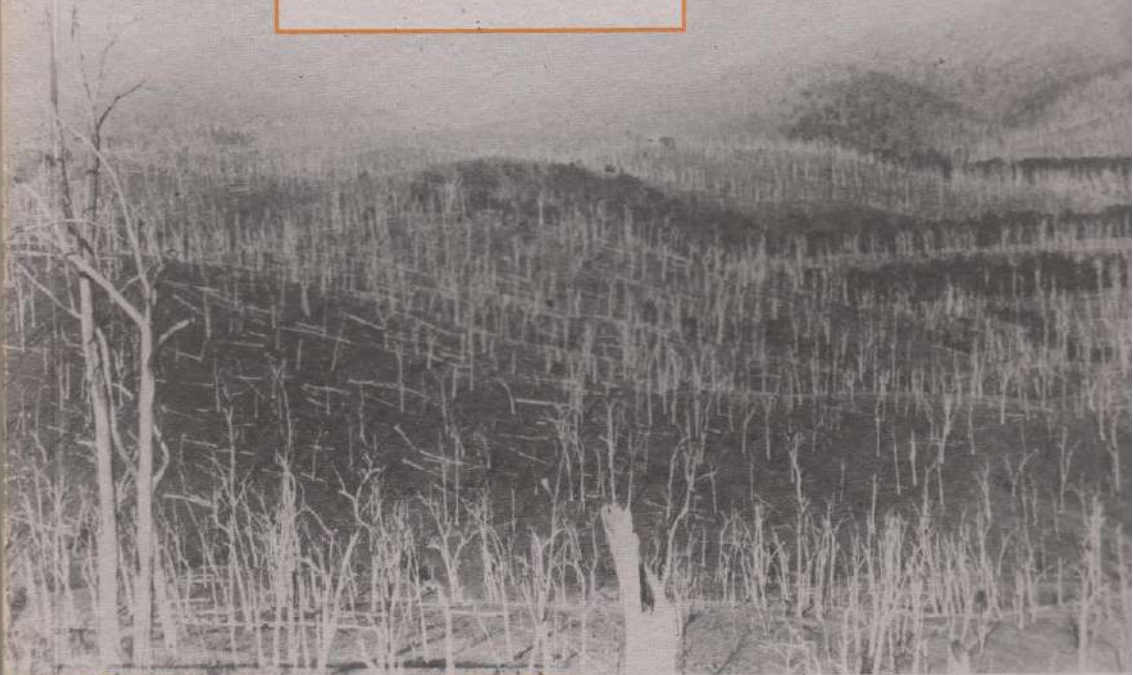




Koala Summit

MANAGING KOALAS IN NEW SOUTH WALES



Edited by Daniel Lunney, Chris Ann Urquhart & Philip Reed

NSW
NATIONAL
PARKS AND
WILDLIFE
SERVICE

11. The Wedderburn koala colony

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The colony

- Re-discovered 1986 after not being seen since the turn of the century.
- Largest colony on the outskirts of Sydney with 85 recorded sightings in 28 month period.
- Appears to be disease free.
- Numerous young indicate a breeding colony.

The threat of development

- Approved rural residential sub-division of 26 blocks of 4 to 10 ha (See Figs 1, 2) (approved by previous council prior to discovery of koalas in area.)
- Blocks intrude directly into koala habitat.
- Roads and housing development will lead to increased fire hazard, increased human interference, feral animals and particularly the threat of domestic dogs allowed to run loose.

Efforts to protect them

- 4.6.88 Interim Protection Order No. 1 placed on area by Minister for Environment, Tim Moore.
- 12.7.88 IPO lifted after Voluntary Conservation Agreement drawn up with owner (Yap Yan Pin P/L) and placed as covenants on the blocks (Appendix 1).
- Union Green Ban placed on development of FEDFA (covering bulldozer drivers) and Building Trades Group of Trades and Labour Council. First Green Ban in the world to protect animal habitat.
- Sept. 88 Council commissioned CSIRO survey to ascertain extent of koala habitat.
- Oct. 88 On basis of survey results (Cork *et al.* 1988), Council resolved to draw up new LEP to rezone the land as Regional Open Space.
- All the above occurred because of opposition by NPA, Macarthur Branch and a local residents' action group.
- The role of NPWS in all this? Apart from drawing up the unenforceable and therefore ineffectual Conservation Agreement with the developer, they have done nothing. They consider the issue a low priority!

The solution

- Acquisition of the whole area by the State Government and its inclusion in the proposed Dharawal Nature Reserve (Fig 3). This action on the part of the Government is needed now! This is not just a local government issue as Tim Moore would have us believe. The ultimate compensation payout to the developer should not have to be borne solely by the Council.
- More long-term research is needed into the colony's numbers, range, preferred feed trees etc. so that an effective plan of management can be drawn up to ensure the koalas' survival in this area.

References

- Cork, S.J., Margules, C.R. and Braithwaite, L.W. (1988). A Survey of Koalas and their Habitat near Wedderburn N.S.W., *Suggestions for Management, and an Assessment of the Potential Effects of a Proposed Subdivision of Four-hectare Environmental Lots. A Report for Campbelltown City Council.* (CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Ecology).
- Douglas, G. and Sheppard, J. (1988). *Proposals for Dharawal Nature Reserve and Macarthur State Recreation Area.* (National Parks Association of N.S.W.).

Appendix 1

Part of the Voluntary Conservation Agreement drawn up between the Minister for Environment, Tim Moore and the developer, Yap Yan Pin P/L

2. USE OF THE SUBJECT LAND:

The Owner covenants with the Minister as follows:-

- 2.1 No development shall be undertaken on the subject land other than on residential allotments or for purposes of suppression of bushfires or provision of essential services including roads unless the prior written approval of the Director has been obtained.
- 2.2 The clearing of vegetation on residential allotments on the subject land shall be restricted to a total area of 2 hectares and no trees shall be removed from the subject land in any clearing of vegetation which does occur without the prior written approval of the Council and the Director.

2.3 Dogs shall not be permitted outside the immediate curtilage of dwellings constructed on residential allotments or elsewhere on the subject land unless on a leash, the "immediate curtilage" of dwellings being defined for the purposes of this Deed as an area not larger than 1 hectare.

2.4 Any fencing erected on the subject land shall be to a design and standard and constructed of materials previously approved in writing by the Council and the Director so as not to unduly impede free passage of koalas on the subject land.

2.5 Intensive agriculture, including but not restricted to intensive animal husbandry, feed

lots, poultry farming, mushroom farming, pig keeping, pig keeping establishments or stables shall not be permitted on the subject land without the prior written approval of the Council and the Minister.

3. RIGHT TO INSPECT:

The Minister, the Director and the Council and their servants and agents may at all times enter upon the subject land excluding however dwellings constructed upon residential allotments and the immediate curtilage thereof in circumstances not permitted under the Act to ensure protection and care of koalas and due compliance with this Deed.

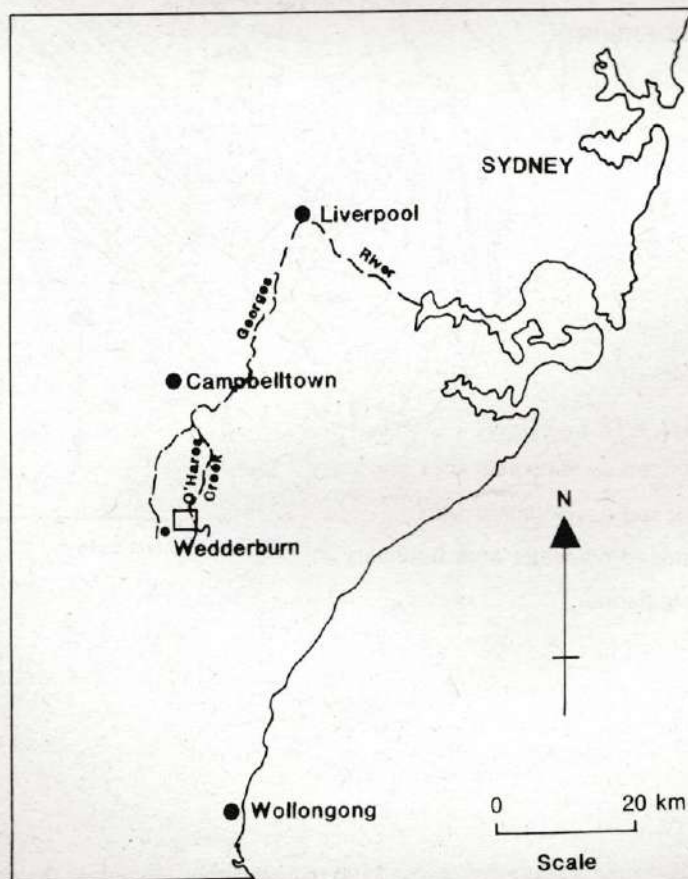


Fig. 1. The sub-division shown in relation to Campbelltown and Sydney (From Cork et al. 1988).

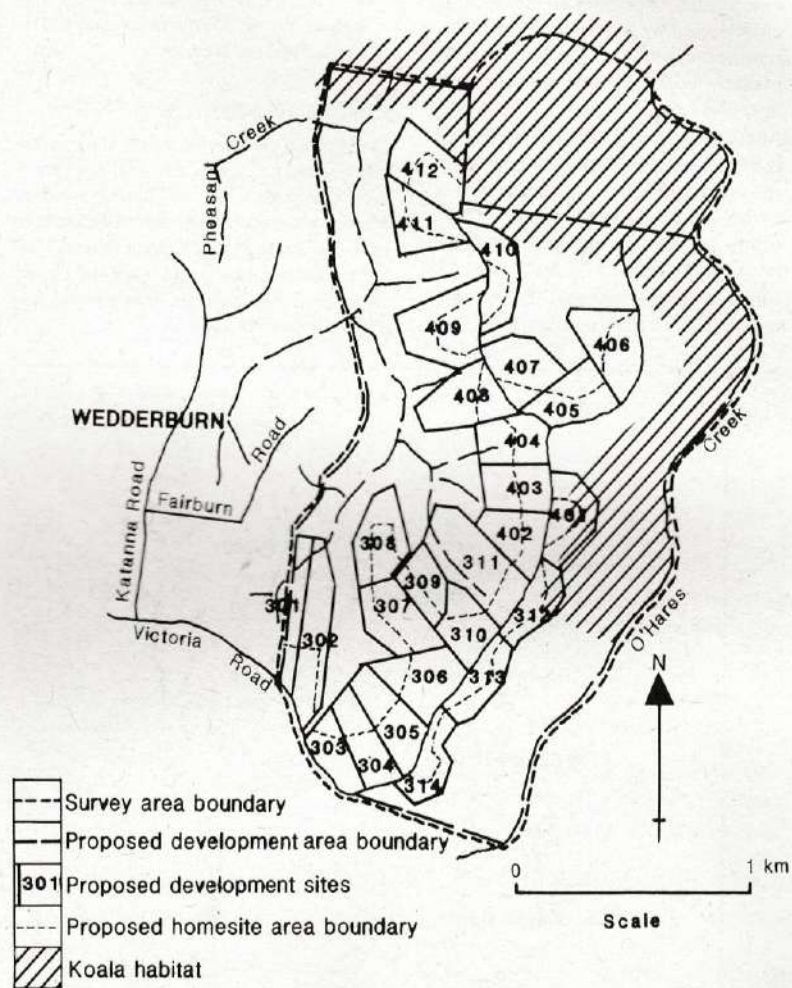


Fig. 2. The sub-division in detail with the proposed 4 ha environmental lots indicated and numbered according to engineering plan 67426/6. All areas within the proposed development area boundary other than the numbered lots are designated for public reserve (From Cork et al. 1988).

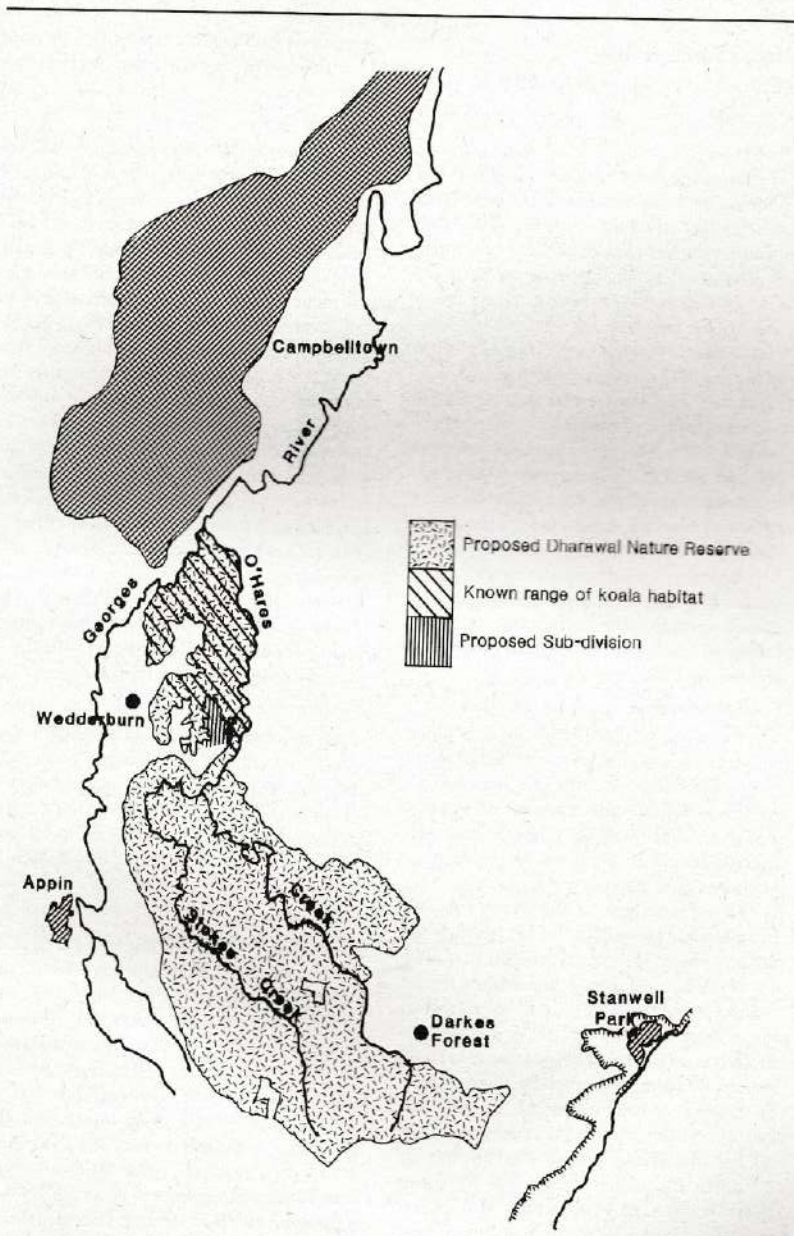


Fig. 3. The proposed Dharawal Nature Reserve (From Douglas and Sheppard 1988).