

Response:

The threatened species test of significance has been undertaken for the Koala specifically for the proposed driveway, removal of Camphor Laurel vegetation and revegetation of the existing driveway entrance.

7.3 Test for determining whether proposed development or activity likely to significantly affect threatened species or ecological communities, or their habitats

(1) The following is to be taken into account for the purposes of determining whether a proposed development or activity is likely to significantly affect threatened species or ecological communities, or their habitats—

(a) in the case of a threatened species, whether the proposed development or activity is likely to have an adverse effect on the life cycle of the species such that a viable local population of the species is likely to be placed at risk of extinction,

The proposal is unlikely to result in an adverse effect on the life cycle of the species that will result in a local population likely to be placed at further risk of extinction. The Camphor Laurel trees that require removal for the new driveway are an exotic weed species and occupy a relatively small footprint in the context of the surrounding landscape. Overall, there will be a net increase in vegetated areas on the subject site and enhanced connectivity as a result of the proposed DA by revegetating the existing driveway entrance.

(b) in the case of an endangered ecological community or critically endangered ecological community, whether the proposed development or activity—

(i) is likely to have an adverse effect on the extent of the ecological community such that its local occurrence is likely to be placed at risk of extinction, or

The proposal is unlikely to result in any adverse effects on any recognised ecological community that is associated with Koala habitat, such that its local occurrence is likely to be placed at risk of extinction. The local Koala population utilises planted sclerophyll vegetation while the original vegetation community in the locality would have been sub-tropical rainforest.

(ii) is likely to substantially and adversely modify the composition of the ecological community such that its local occurrence is likely to be placed at risk of extinction,

The proposal is unlikely to result in any modification of an ecological community that is associated with Koala habitat, such that its local occurrence is likely to be placed at risk of extinction.

(c) in relation to the habitat of a threatened species or ecological community—

(i) the extent to which habitat is likely to be removed or modified as a result of the proposed development or activity, and

The proposal requires the removal of an exotic weed species, being Camphor laurel, and relocation of an existing driveway so the resulting single driveway physical footprint is very similar. The existing driveway location will be revegetated with native species that will be at minimum equivalent to the existing area of exotic vegetation required to be removed for the new driveway.

(ii) whether an area of habitat is likely to become fragmented or isolated from other areas of habitat as a result of the proposed development or activity, and

The proposal does will not result in significant fragmentation or isolation of Koala habitat considering that Camphor laurel trees do not constitute a recognised Koala habitat classification under the relevant definitions under the NSW SEPP. The proponent has successfully established a large wildlife corridor on private property that provide significant habitat that includes Koala food trees.

(iii) the importance of the habitat to be removed, modified, fragmented or isolated to the long-term survival of the species or ecological community in the locality,

There is no scientific evidence to suggest that the removal of a small patch of Camphor Laurel vegetation is likely to threaten the long-term survival of Koalas in the locality. The ongoing enhancement of native vegetation on the subject site is likely to result in positive outcomes for the local Koala population.

(d) whether the proposed development or activity is likely to have an adverse effect on any declared area of outstanding biodiversity value (either directly or indirectly),

The proposal does not have any environmental impacts on any declared area of outstanding biodiversity value.

(e) whether the proposed development or activity is or is part of a key threatening process or is likely to increase the impact of a key threatening process.

Relevant 'Key Threatening Processes' for the Koala in the Bangalow locality include:

- Loss, modification and fragmentation of habitat
- Vehicle strike
- Dog attack

The proposal includes the removal of Camphor Laurel trees, an exotic weed species while the net result of vegetated area will be positive and include additional native species. The proposal will result in linked Koala use trees on the southern side of Rifle Range Road to the internal revegetated wild life corridor with the driveway entrance to the western side of this connection. The proposal does not increase dog attack risk.