

Council's Reference:

ECM

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SEPP 44 review Submission RVC

Telephone Enquiries to:

Craig Rideout

**Richmond
Valley
Council**



19 December 2016

Director, Planning Frameworks
NSW Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Submission in response to the exhibition of the proposed changes to SEPP 44 conducted by NSW Planning & Environment – Richmond Valley Council.

Richmond Valley Council welcomes the opportunity to provide comments concerning the recently exhibited proposed changes to SEPP 44 and would like to offer the following observations:

RVC welcomes the review of the SEPP overall as it is a timeworn document and in particular welcomes the revised definitions of 'core' and 'secondary' habitat with clarification for all habitat as to the level of koala presence. This extra level of detail would be particularly useful in Local Government Areas that have a large area of potential habitat which is not necessary ever utilised by the iconic species.

There is a marked lack of detail supplied for the exhibition and within the 'Explanation of Intended Effect' and consequently it is hard to judge the effectiveness of the intended changes without the essential detail. It is requested that the actual proposed wording of the draft document and guidelines be distributed for comment again prior to final adoption.

The updated list of 65 tree species deemed important to the survival of the species (up from 10 listed currently) is a welcome addition.

The expansion of the habitat definitions could potentially require additional and costly 'truthing' which could potentially lead to an additional requirement for expensive study that could be outside the capability of many Council budgets.

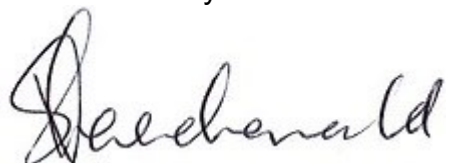
The development of guidelines to inform the process for Development Assessment, particularly in areas which may be outside the scope of an approved Comprehensive Koala Plan, is generally welcomed. It should be noted this process should not be excessively onerous and costly to the landholder and should not constitute a disincentive for future developmental prospects.

RVC in particular welcomes the aim to provide updated and clear guidelines for the preparation of comprehensive plans and individual plans of management.

We look forward to having an opportunity to comment further once suggested provisions have been drafted, for an improved SEPP 44 to provide a more certain way forward to protect the iconic koala species.

If you would like to discuss this matter further please do not hesitate to contact Planning Officer Craig Rideout on 02 6660 0219 or by email at craig.rideout@richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vaughan Macdonald', written in a cursive style.

Vaughan Macdonald
General Manager
Richmond Valley Council