

ITEM 21 NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR CATH BLAKEY - KOALA CROSSINGS FOR APPIN ROAD

Councillor Cath Blakey has submitted the following Notice of Motion –

“I formally move that –

- 1 Council writes to the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, the Minister for Environment, and the Minister for Roads calling for an additional koala corridor underpass to be added on Appin Road at Mallaty Creek.
- 2 Council makes a submission to the Transport for NSW Appin Road Safety Improvements consultation calling for an additional koala corridor underpass to be added on Appin Road at Mallaty Creek.”

Background provided by Councillor Cath Blakey:

Appin Road is a major road linking south-west Sydney to Wollongong. Around 12,000 motorists use Appin Road every day and this is expected to grow by about 40 per cent over the next 30 years as the human population increases. Over the last 18 months there have been 35 koalas hit by vehicles as they tried to cross Appin Road. Of these, only two koalas survived their injuries and were rehabilitated by wildlife care volunteers. A 3.6 kilometer section of Appin Road is being widened from two to four lanes as part of the Macarthur Growth Area. Transport for NSW is seeking feedback on the Appin Road Safety Improvements Addendum REF until 15 August 2024.

Symbio Wildlife Park have recently conducted thermal drone surveys and recorded koalas on the Illawarra Escarpment. These koala's on the Illawarra Escarpment are connected to the source population in Campbelltown which is a stronghold population free of chlamydia. Chlamydia is a genital disease that was introduced into Australia with infected livestock in the late 1780's, where it then spread to the koala population. In koalas untreated chlamydia causes blindness, severe bladder inflammation, infertility and death. The Campbelltown population is healthy and breeding, and the source of koalas that are re-emerging on the Illawarra Escarpment.

Mallaty Creek is a crucial koala hotspot with a high incidence of koala roadside deaths. It is the most direct koala corridor from the Georges River to the Nepean River, directly linking to the new Georges River Koala National Park. A safe crossing at Mallaty Creek is crucial to ensure that the recovering population of koalas in the Illawarra Escarpment can continue to expand.

Transport for NSW Appin Road Safety Improvement feedback:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/have-your-say/appin-road-safety-improvements>

The 'Save Mallaty Creek koala corridor' petition by the Sydney Basin Koala Network:

https://www.sydneybasinkoalanetwork.org.au/save_the_vital_mallaty_creek_koala_corridor