



Hon Steven Miles MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for State Development, Infrastructure,
Local Government and Planning

Our ref: WR21/6699

Your ref: A657625

23 MAR 2021

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Corner of Alice and George Streets
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Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 25 February 2021 regarding petition 3477-21: Protect Wildlife Habitat from Urban Development.

Queensland's planning framework under the *Planning Act 2016* seeks to protect our environment, heritage and natural resources, boost our economy and give Queenslanders great places to live, work and to play. In doing so, it plays a key role in balancing biodiversity protections and facilitating urban growth and development.

In Queensland, endangered and threatened species and their habitats are identified as Matters of State Environmental Significance (MSES). MSES are protected in a number of ways, such as requiring environmental licences and approvals for undertaking activities that may impact MSES, and also through the planning framework.

The planning framework identifies and protects MSES through a combination of strategic planning policies and development assessment requirements.

The State Planning Policy 2017 (SPP) has effect throughout Queensland and expresses the state's interests in land use planning and development. Environment and heritage, and in particular biodiversity, is one of the state interests set down in the SPP. The SPP's Biodiversity policy requires local government planning schemes to ensure that development is located to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on MSES. This is undertaken through appropriate zoning of land and specific development assessment requirements to regulate development.

The South East Queensland (SEQ) Regional Plan (*ShapingSEQ*) provides some regional context to this, identifying regional biodiversity corridors which are to be maintained, enhanced, and protected from fragmentation. These areas are also protected through local government planning schemes.

Most recently, the Planning Regulation 2017 was amended to introduce planning controls prohibiting the clearing of core koala habitat in SEQ, and also introducing koala friendly development assessment requirements.

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In relation to the August 2020 Australian Conservation Foundation report, I note the focus is at the national level, specifically the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

Significant reforms to the EPBC Act are currently being considered by the Commonwealth Government, as recommended by the recent independent review undertaken by Professor Graeme Samuel AC. The Queensland Government is monitoring the Commonwealth Government's response and what this might mean for Queensland.

I would like to thank the petitioners for raising this matter with me and I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



STEVEN MILES MP
DEPUTY PREMIER
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