

# New Brisbane suburb: More koalas to die on road

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Koala deaths are expected to increase if plans for a major new suburb in Brisbane's west go ahead. *Photo: James Fitzgerald*

Brisbane's planned super suburb between The Gap and Upper Kedron will increase "koala strike" on Mt Nebo Road, its own planning documents reveal.

Koala strike – where koalas are hit, killed and injured by cars - is the leading killer of koalas in urban parts of Queensland.

Plans for the new suburb in Brisbane's west include two roads to connect with bushland stretches of Mt Nebo Road at The Gap - one an extension of Ross Road, the other an extension of Canvey Road.

Ross Road would be extended right beside the Bellbird Grove section of D'Aguilar National Park.

Developer Cedar Woods' traffic study for the project makes it clear the development would increase koala strike on Mt Nebo Road.

"An increase in vehicles on Mt Nebo Road will require minor road widening and other upgrade works to be completed, resulting in minor loss of habitat," the report says.

"Of greater significance is an increase in vehicles movements on Mt Nebo Road, increasing the potential for vehicle strike on conservation significant fauna, such as the koala."

The plan for the new suburb was revealed [this week by Fairfax Media](#).

The company's ecological study – by 28 South Environmental Consultants - shows the impact on koalas would be the main conservation concern.

"The findings from our fauna assessment indicate that the species of greatest conservation significance occurring on the site is the koala," it says.

"The site also supports locally significant species such as the sugar glider, the masked owl, the eastern long-necked turtle, lace monitor, the wedge-tailed eagle and the brown goshawk."

National Parks Minister Steve Dickson expressed his concern about the issue on Thursday.

“D’Aguilar National Park offers a spectacular mix of eucalypt woodland, subtropical rainforest and gorges which is a much-loved picnic spot for many Queensland families, just half an hour outside Brisbane, “ Mr Dickson said.

“While the proposal is yet to formally reviewed by my department, I will be looking to ensure that any development adjacent to or near D’Aguilar National Park does not adversely impact on the values of the park, nor on park visitors.

“Natural buffers are certainly one way that impacts of urban development can be mitigated and it will be essential for the development to include appropriate fire protection features given its bush land location.”

Cedar Woods' planning studies – which can be read on Brisbane City Council’s planning online site - show the Ross Road connection to Mt Nebo Road would be the main southern access to the new suburb.

The studies show 40 per cent of traffic from the site would travel down Mt Nebo Road.

“Residents in the southern parts of the proposed development are expected to use this route as their primary access to and from the site,” documents say.

“Residents in the northern portions of the proposed development are expected to use Canvey Road as their primary access.”

Cedar Woods state manager Nathan Blackburne said the company was “very conscious” of the potential impact of traffic on existing roads and wildlife.

“Cedar Woods has commissioned traffic engineers to undertake the appropriate studies,” he said.

“It is important to remember, however, that this development will take place over a 10 year period. Throughout this process, Cedar Woods is eager to work with council, the state government and the community to lessen the impact on residents.”

Mr Blackburne said the proposed road near the popular Bellbird Grove picnic site – part of D’Aguilar National Park - would be separated by a “green buffer”, which Fairfax Media understands could be between 50 and 100 metres.

“Bellbird Grove is an important part of the local amenity and a valuable asset for The Gap and Upper Kedron residents,” he said.

“The proposed development does not have an impact on the parkland or adjoining bushwalks.

“Cedar Woods proposes that an appropriate environmental buffer will be in place between Bellbird Grove and the development.”