

Calls for greater wildlife protection

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A BALLARAT wildlife group is calling on the Golden Plains Shire to address how the municipal growing places strategy will impact local wildlife.

As part of the push the Ballarat Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation is calling on the community to ask questions about the safety of local native animals.

Currently in draft form, the strategy was created with the aim of guiding growth the Shire until 2050 following independent research that was conducted during the last two years.

The strategy's two key objectives are to extend growth that is already happening and support it with infrastructure.

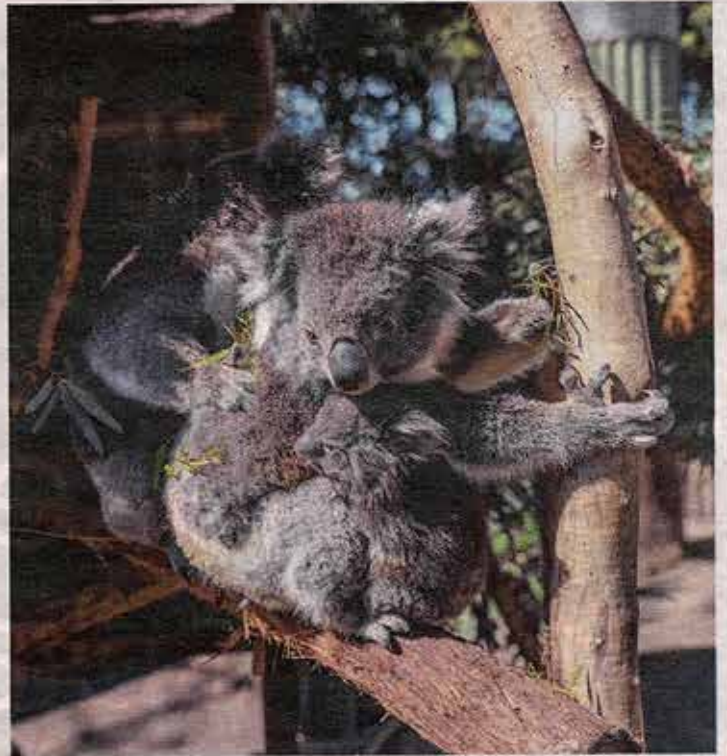
The objectives are based around the idea that good services in growth areas can attract investment.

President of the Ballarat Wildlife Rehabilitation Conservation, Jessica Robertson, said the group's members are concerned with how this strategy will affect local wildlife and biodiversity.

"Removing more trees would be really bad for wildlife because we've had so much habitat destruction over the years," she said.

"An opportunity for development in area that isn't removing trees or bushland is a good opportunity because it doesn't impact as much wildlife."

Ms Robertson said she would



Furry friends: There are concerns with how Golden Plains Shire's Growing Places strategy will affect local wildlife. Photo: FILE

like any long-term municipal strategy to include aspects of wildlife and biodiversity protection.

She also said a loss of habitat is forcing animals like kangaroos to head towards towns and cities in search of places to live.

"When they build new roads, it would be great to include things like wildlife bridges because of course development increases traffic," she said.

"One of the biggest threats to wildlife is road trauma."

It is hoped that in future Golden

Plains Shire officers would seek out the input of groups such as Ballarat Wildlife Rehabilitation Conservation for consultation when creating planning and strategy documents that could impact native animals or their habitat.

"We're actually the front-line workers so we have understanding and knowledge about the needs of wildlife," Ms Robertson said.

"The Department of Environment, they're the regulators but they're not the first responders."

