

NEWS

'No koalas' in proposed subdivision area

Alison Foletta

A THREE-LOT subdivision in Canadian has been proposed but may face barriers as a potential koala habitat.

The land on Fussell Street currently has a three-bedroom home on it, sold on June 28 for \$600,000.

The plans show three lots proposed for the back of the property.

The area has multiple overlays including environmental significance, vegetation protection, and

Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity.

A report was conducted on native vegetation removal and koala habitat potential; it found the vegetation to be mostly eucalyptus.

The City of Ballarat's Koala Habitat Planning Map has the area marked as potential.

A 2020 inspection found the trees on site could be primary or secondary food sources.

The assessment, conducted by a Geelong company, found "no koalas were ob-

served during the assessment and no evidence was found to indicate that koalas are currently occupying the study area. The area may facilitate movement for local koala populations, however this site is unlikely to act as a key linkage."

The vegetation assessment found eight Indigenous plant species were identified during the vegetation assessment, such as eucalypt and blackwood trees, which are classed as Local Conservation Significance.

There are five eucalypt trees planned to be removed for the subdivision.

The land has vegetation to one side and the back, and residential properties down one side.

Koala concerns

Wildlife shelters and care groups have raised concerns over the lack of koalas seen recently around the Ballarat region.

Ballarat Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation secretary Melissa Morey said

they were concerned about the lack of koalas

"We've got a small number of koalas in the Ballarat area - road trauma and dog attacks for them is just huge," she said.

City of Ballarat council lifted a pet ban in a Mount Helen estate in June, an area known as a koala corridor.

BWRAC opposed the move.

"Koala numbers in Ballarat have rapidly declined in the past decade," president Jessica Robertson said.



The back of the Fussell Street property where the trees will be removed for the subdivision. Picture by Kate Healy



Planting trees for a better Sebastopol

Michelle Smith

A PLANT species found only at Enfield, south of Ballarat, now has another home at Berry Street School.

As part of National Schools Tree Planting Day on Friday, students at the Sebastopol school planted Enfield Banksia, only found in bushland around Enfield, in their school yard as some of the more than 50 shrubs

planet. And with students now keen to build on their tree planting experience, the school is looking to partner with Landcare and provide willing volunteers in their project to help revegetate along the Yarrowee Creek.

"There has been so much conversation ... which started with discussion about plants, what is native to this area and why it's important to plant species native to the