



NEW SOUTH WALES

MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

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Level 10
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Phone: 27 5974PRESS RELEASEEMBARGO SATURDAY, 13TH AUGUST, 1988WEDDERBURN KOALAS PROTECTION

New South Wales Environment Minister, Tim Moore, today challenged the Campbelltown City Council to stop a land development in the Wedderburn area, that local residents fear threatens the future of a colony of koalas.

Mr. Moore says the Council approved the subdivision, and could stop it easily, by just revoking the development consent, under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. All that's required to initiate it is a simple majority vote at a council meeting.

He says the Labor-dominated Council's refusal to act showed that some Labor Aldermen, and the State Labor Party were using the Wedderburn koalas as a political football, in - "a cynical campaign of lies and distortions".

He says if local residents are still concerned about the fate of the koalas, they should take their protests straight to the council and force them to stop the development.

Mr. Moore says if the Labor aldermen's concern is genuine, rather than just political gesturing, then they'll intervene, stop the development and face the possible legal consequences.

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Mr. Moore says they should - "put up or shut up. The ball's now back in their court. We've done what we can to buy time and protect the koalas. The Labor aldermen have the powers and should use them".

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Following advice to the Minister from the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the interim protection order on the Wedderburn land has now been lifted as a long term arrangement for protection of koalas has been negotiated - (The voluntary conservation agreement).

It is also noted that under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974, it is an offence for any person who does not hold a licence issued under that Act to take, kill or possess a koala, the penalty being \$2,000 or 6 months' imprisonment or both.

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