



Cathy Morant, a distant relative of Harry "Breaker" Morant, above right, and the Boer War Memorial in the city, left. Pictures: Sean Davey, Australian War Memorial, Neon Martin

# Fence could save koalas

## Technology trial to be a state-first

**BEN CAMERON**

The deaths of nearly 90 koalas, killed by vehicles in Tea Tree Gully in the past three years, have prompted a "virtual fencing" trial on local roads in what would be a state-first.

Local animal welfare group 1300KOALAZ has offered to supply \$40,000 of fencing at no cost to ratepayers.

The 4km of fencing on local roads would prevent cars colliding with koalas.

The council would install the fencing and monitor its effectiveness.

The fencing is activated for short periods by the headlights of approaching vehicles, causing it to emit a combination of low-level sound and light to alert animals to cars, a report tabled with the council revealed.

It causes animals to "pause before crossing the road, long enough to prevent a collision", and infrastructure will be spaced out every 25m on alter-

nate sides of a road.

The council will work to develop a "suitable trial approach".

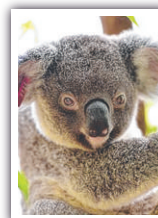
The group reported a spike in koala deaths after works to upgrade Golden Grove Rd which involved removal of 180 trees.

Group co-founder Cheryl Zampin said it would be the first council in the state to use the fencing, following 18 months of negotiations.

"What it actually means for us is less koalas will lose their lives over vehicle strike, or be in care because of a vehicle strike," Ms Zampin said.

"It will see a reduction in accidents, injuries or fatalities. It does have a high reliability and could stop a lot of grief with insurance claims.

"It's a great win, not only for the residents but for the koalas and other wildlife - even dogs and cats will benefit."



She said some of the biggest hot spots were Range Rd North, Upper Hermitage; North East Rd, Modbury; Perseverance Rd, Tea Tree Gully and Golden Grove Rd from Modbury Heights through to Wynn Vale.

The fencing comes with a "residential setting" which minimises the disturbance to residents.

Logan City Council in Queensland reported a 70 per cent reduction in the number of wallaby strikes after using the fencing, the report says.

Eighty-six koalas have been killed by cars across the council area since August, 2018, 1300KOALAZ says.

"Of particular concern is Golden Grove and Range Rd North where more than 30 and 15 koala deaths respectively have occurred during this three-year period," the report reveals.

Deputy Mayor Lucas Jones said the council wanted to do all it could to keep koalas safe.

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