

# Developments blamed for dwindling wildlife

Tony Grant

ANGRY residents from the northern beaches are watching wildlife numbers plummet because of road kill — and they want something done about it.

Members of the Project Wallaby Committee — many of who live near the Bluewater and Kewarra Beach development sites — have called on the State Government to take immediate action.

Clifton Beach resident Lana Walker joined the group after seeing wallaby numbers decline.

She claims one group has been reduced from 60 to 25 in three months from January to April this year.

“The slaughter started when they started developing this area,” she said.

With developments planned for Bluewater, Kewarra and Trinity beaches and near the Holy Cross school site, she said the animals were being forced away from their natural habitats.

Ms Walker said she was shocked by the attitude of Cairns City Council and the state and federal governments towards the preservation of its wildlife.

“In Australia the animals featured on the coat of arms are icons, yet the Government is willing to let these unique creatures perish like this,” she said.

Since October last year the group had consulted Division 11 councillor Sno Bonneau, Member for Barron River Lesley Clark and sent a petition — signed by students from Smithfield High School — to the State Government over the issue.

Cr Bonneau acknowledged the group's concerns, but said a recent meeting planned between developers, Consolidated Properties and residents was a failure.

“At great expense the developers flew people up here to meet the residents and not one

of their representatives attended,” he said.

However, Cr Bonneau confirmed discussions between parties had been positive and that the firm had appointed an environmental specialist to carry out a comprehensive survey of the area.

“The specialist will look at their planned site — between Trinity Park and Trinity Beach — to see if wildlife corridors could be created,” Cr Bonneau said.

Cr Bonneau said he sympathised with the group, but called on them to be patient.