

Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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Submitted by: West End Community Association Inc.
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Committee Secretary
Cost of Living and Economics Parliament Committee

E: colec@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary and relevant staff

RE: Economic Development Queensland Amendment Bill

I'm writing to you on behalf of the West End Community Association (WECA) as the peak association of Kurilpa (West End, Hill End, Highgate Hill, South Brisbane and WoMo). Since forming in 2004, we have celebrated and promoted our values and the people that make Kurilpa peninsula a vibrant and diverse neighbourhood. Our activities and initiatives include campaigns for sustainable development, social justice and access and utilisation of public spaces and organising free community events in collaboration with local organisations.

Changes

We note the drivers for these amendments includes the following:

- need to update and improve the EDCQ after lessons learnt from the dominant powers of the ULDA.
- Recommendations of the National Housing Supply and Affordability Council for state and territory development corporations should accelerate land assembly, infrastructure provision.(Recommendation 3)
- the hardship and suffering of citizens facing a housing crisis.

Summary of Concerns

The association is concerned about the impacts of the process and content of the proposed amendments with regard to:

- poor consultation process and timing
- liveability of our growing communities state-wide
- lack of alignment of planning principles and neighbourhood plans
- degree of citizen representation in planning outcomes inferring “public benefit”
- public accountability of the planning outcomes – social and affordable housing and much needed social infrastructure provision.
- Infrastructure charge and covering costs for social infrastructure provision.

Local context

Our position has been informed by the planning and development experience of the Kurilpa Peninsula. We have carried our responsibilities for housing 9,000 new dwellings built since 2010 and another 6,000 approved, even as social infrastructure (education, parks, transport) has lagged. This lack of balance is the result of BCC approval of developments that exceed the building parameters of the South Brisbane Riverside Neighbourhood Plan.

Recently BCC's and State Government unilateral application for a Temporary Local Planning Instrument (TLPI) to overturn the existing system without any community consultation is anti-democratic.

The Kurilpa Sustainable Growth Plan 02/2023 and the Housing Bill are using the housing crisis to upzone land without mandating the provision of affordable housing. The Kurilpa Sustainable Growth Plan 02/2023 allows the developer to EVADE AH provision. Since October only 2 DA's have been lodged. None of these chose affordable housing as the community benefit. The plan has failed in its publicly stated purpose.

The communities' level of public confidence in government has been eroded by these significant legislative actions that deliver poor planning outcomes and limited to nil public benefit.

Some of the proposed changes to EDQ can be considered an improvement to the outsourcing of the long-standing powers of the old ULDA to an independent entity. However we call for mechanisms of publicly accountability.

WECA's Areas for improvements

Call for submissions

The Queensland Government has called for submissions on its proposed reforms to the Economic Development Queensland Act – yes, the same Act Toondah Harbour was promoted under up until yesterday! Submissions close on Thursday 11 April – a terrible deadline given the Easter school holidays etc. But the proposed amendments are significant and, in or view, quite disturbing – including power to make compulsory acquisitions in urban renewal areas. SEQCA's submission focuses on four main areas that need to be improved:

Community representation: This Act is about development for community purposes – so let's see some guaranteed community representation on the Economic Development Board (see Cl. 50)

Objectives that embrace good planning outcomes: The days when economic development was the only rationale for planning and development (if it ever was) are out the window guys! Let's use this opportunity to enshrine the goals we as a community really want to achieve – social and affordable housing; improved climate resilience, reduced carbon emissions, enhanced liveability and nature positive outcomes integrated into the built environment. And the commitment to these objectives shouldn't stop at s 3 – they need to be reflected in the content of urban renewal frameworks and development conditions. See cl.4, 35, 36 and 38.

Consistency with other planning instruments: Urban renewal frameworks need, at the very least, to be consistent with the relevant PDA development scheme, the regional plan for the area and the Housing Strategy of the relevant local government. And, as with these instruments, a more transparent and consultative preparation process is required. See cl.38.

Social and affordable housing: Firstly, Affordable Housing must be defined in accordance with the *Planning Regulation 2017* " Affordable Housing means housing that is appropriate to the needs of households with low to moderate incomes, if the members of the households will spend no more than 30% of gross income on housing costs".

We need to see a genuine commitment to timely, guaranteed delivery of social AND affordable housing within the boundaries of the SAME PDA as the urban renewal area. There needs to be absolutely No wiggle room to postpone or substitute on this outcome. We need transparent targets, continuous monitoring and regular reporting to the community on progress in implementing this and the other objectives of this Act. How else are these matters really going to be enforced? See cl. 36, cl.40.

Infrastructure charges and Social infrastructure provision

The MEDQ may issue a direction to collect infrastructure charges from local governments or distributor-retailers for PDA/PPDA applications approved after the declaration. We urge such powers be used to make developers as housing providers pay for social infrastructure provision driven by their developments. We are wary of Housing agreements with an entity to waive payment obligations in exchange for providing social housing or affordable housing. In past experiences the fee waivers have been granted and AH has been diminished in volume and/or charged at market rate over time. In such cases the public purse is subsidising private gains(profit) two fold.

Sincerely,



Seleneah More ,
President,

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