

Executive Summary

This report presents the Primary Industries and Resources Committee's examination of the State Development and Public Works Organisation (Critical Minerals) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026 (the Bill).

The Bill aims to ensure that Queensland has a regulatory framework that attracts and supports investment in major projects, including projects in the critical minerals sector. It is intended to facilitate faster and clearer decision-making for major developments capable of making a significant contribution to Queensland's economic development.

To achieve these objectives, the Bill proposes substantial amendments to the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971*. The principal reforms would:

- establish new facilitation mechanisms for State strategic projects, including State significance notices and modification orders
- expand and clarify existing prescribed-project, easement, step-in and notice-to-decide powers
- replace the prescribed-development framework with a new infrastructure coordination plan framework for resources regions
- integrate regional interests and certain transport infrastructure matters into the coordinated-project assessment framework
- expand the State development area framework to certain supporting development outside declared areas
- replace the existing private infrastructure facility framework with new compulsory-acquisition and land-access arrangements
- make operational and consequential amendments supporting the implementation of the reforms.

During its inquiry, the committee received written submissions from individuals, industry bodies, regional development organisations, local governments, agricultural and landholder groups, environmental organisations and professional bodies. The committee also received written and oral evidence from the department and heard from stakeholders at a public hearing in Mackay.

Stakeholders expressed differing views about the objectives pursued in the Bill and its approach to achieving them. Industry and regional development organisations generally supported measures intended to improve whole-of-government coordination, reduce regulatory duplication and delay, increase investment certainty and strengthen Queensland's competitiveness in attracting major-project investment. Their support was commonly qualified by calls for clear criteria, transparent decision-making, effective consultation and the preservation of existing regulatory safeguards.

In contrast, environmental and community groups as well as landholders raised concerns that the Bill would confer broad powers on the Minister and Coordinator-General, reduce public participation and appeal rights, weaken established assessment processes and expose environmental, agricultural, cultural and property interests to greater risk. Some submitters also questioned whether the need for the proposed powers had been sufficiently demonstrated.

The committee examined the Bill's proposed reforms to coordinated projects, infrastructure coordination plans, State strategic projects, State significance notices, modification orders, compulsory acquisition and land access, and State development areas. In its examination, particular consideration was given to Ministerial discretion, transparency and accountability, public consultation, appeal and review rights, environmental and agricultural safeguards, property rights, and parliamentary scrutiny.

The committee concluded that the Bill departs from fundamental legislative principles only to the extent necessary to achieve the government's policy objectives and in a manner that is adequately justified.

The committee also considered the Bill's compatibility with human rights, particularly its potential impact on the right to take part in public life, freedom of expression, the right to a fair hearing, the right to property, and the cultural rights of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It concluded that any limits on those rights are proportional and sufficiently justified.

The committee made 1 recommendation, that the Bill be passed.