

Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025

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Victoria Park / Barrambin represents one of the last opportunities for Brisbane to secure and protect a large, central green space that serves the entire community. Cities around the world have long understood the value of preserving expansive public parks in urban centres, both as a drawcard for tourism and as essential infrastructure for the mental, physical, and social wellbeing of residents. Brisbane lags behind in this regard, and there is no other site within the inner city that offers the same scale, accessibility, and environmental significance as Victoria Park. Beyond its obvious recreational and environmental value, the site also holds profound cultural significance for First Nations peoples. This is not just a matter of symbolism; it is a living cultural landscape that deserves to be respected, protected, and embedded into the city's future, not treated as an inconvenient obstacle to development. What is most concerning is that rather than embracing the rare chance to showcase Brisbane's natural assets and cultural heritage to a global audience during the Olympics, the current proposal seeks to erase them. What happened to the Victoria Park Master Plan; a forward thinking plan for an exciting and inclusive public space, which embraced the cultural and environmental importance of the site. The decision to place a stadium within this park risks irreparable damage not only to the environment and the community but also to Brisbane's reputation as a forward-thinking, liveable city. It is difficult to imagine a more short-sighted choice; while other host cities use the Olympics to celebrate their landscapes, Brisbane appears set to make itself a global case study in poor urban planning. Why a Stadium in Victoria Park Is the Wrong Decision There are multiple, logical reasons why this proposal cannot be justified. From a basic urban planning and safety perspective, the proximity of the site to the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, major universities, and several large schools makes it highly inappropriate for stadium-scale infrastructure. The area is already subject to significant congestion, and the addition of large-scale events would inevitably place strain on emergency services, potentially delaying ambulances, compromising patient care, and creating a daily safety risk for students and staff. Equally problematic is the fact that there are far more suitable locations available which are underutilised and far better placed in terms of transport, access, and surrounding infrastructure. Choosing Victoria Park over these alternatives appears to be less about good planning and more about political convenience and self-interest of a few, rather than serving the broader public interest. What is most infuriating is the proposal to take publicly owned space, space that belongs to all Brisbane residents, and hand it over for the benefit of a limited, ticketed, private use. It is frankly outrageous that this could even be considered when there are clear alternatives that do not require sacrificing one of the city's most important public assets. Finally, the environmental and cultural consequences cannot be overstated. The park is critical in mitigating the urban heat island effect, supporting biodiversity, and maintaining air quality in an increasingly dense city. Destroying it would have permanent negative impacts on the city's livability, and would also further entrench the ongoing pattern of ignoring and erasing First Nations histories and connections to land. Why the Bill Is Dangerous The Bill is deeply concerning not only for what it proposes to build but for the precedent it sets in stripping away hard-won community rights and safeguards. It overrides essential planning, environmental, and cultural heritage protections, removes the right of community members and organisations to challenge decisions in the courts, and introduces a fast-tracked cultural heritage process that effectively forces First Nations peoples into accepting default outcomes if they cannot meet arbitrary timelines. This is an assault on democratic process, transparency, and accountability, and it should be of concern to every Queenslanders regardless of their views on the Olympics themselves. What I Am Asking I ask that the committee recommend: 1. The removal of Victoria Park / Barrambin from Schedule 1 and

the immediate abandonment of any proposal to build a stadium on this site.2. That the cultural heritage override provisions within the Bill be withdrawn.3. That Olympic developments remain subject to the same planning, environmental, and cultural heritage laws as any other development in Queensland.4. That the Victoria Park Master Plan, developed through years of genuine community consultation, be upheld as the guiding document for the site's future.