

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

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To: Committee Secretary
Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025
Parliament of Queensland
Dear Committee Members, I am writing to express my strong concerns about the Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) Bill, which I believe sets a troubling precedent by allowing Olympic-related developments to bypass key planning and environmental protections. With the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games on the horizon, Queensland has a unique opportunity to be recognised on the global stage - not only for hosting a world-class event, but also for respecting our natural landscapes and rich cultural heritage. Ensuring all developments are responsibly assessed is essential to protect what makes this state so special - from the Great Barrier Reef to the vulnerable koala populations that are already under pressure. I am especially concerned about the potential consequences of exempting Olympic projects from proper scrutiny - particularly at places like Barrambin (Victoria Park) and the site proposed for the Redlands Whitewater Centre. These are areas of deep cultural and ecological significance and should not be shielded from planning laws that serve to protect them. I support holding renewable energy developers to high standards of transparency and community engagement, and I welcome measures that ensure local communities benefit from these projects. However, I worry that the proposed requirements may unintentionally delay or discourage investment in clean energy, just when urgent action on climate is so desperately needed. I encourage the Government to focus instead on advancing the Renewable Energy Zone framework, supporting the creation of Local Energy Hubs, and giving councils the resources needed to work with their communities on deciding local priorities for benefit funds. It is also critical that the same rules apply consistently across industries. At present, there appears to be a loophole that would allow a coal mine producing less than two million tonnes a year to avoid full environmental assessment - while a small solar project would be burdened with extensive requirements. That is not balanced policy, and it does not reflect the climate leadership Queensland should be showing. All development proposals - whether for Olympic infrastructure, mining, energy, or housing - must be subject to thorough environmental and community impact assessments. No sector should be allowed to sidestep these responsibilities. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important Bill. Kind regards, Julie Walker