

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

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I love Brisbane. One of the things that makes this city so special — and so rare among major cities around the world — is the rich wildlife that still lives in and around it. From koalas in suburban trees to the vast green spaces that wind through our neighbourhoods, this natural heritage is something we should treasure, protect, and proudly showcase during the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. That's why I'm deeply concerned about the Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) Bill. It sets a worrying precedent by allowing Olympic developments to override existing environmental and planning laws. This risks not only damaging our precious ecosystems but also undermining the very identity we want to present to the world when global attention turns to Queensland in 2032. We have a chance to show the world that we are a state that values and safeguards our extraordinary natural environment and First Nations cultural heritage. That includes world-renowned treasures like the Great Barrier Reef and our iconic local koala populations — but also deeply significant local places like Barrambin (Victoria Park) and the proposed site of the Redlands Whitewater Centre. These are not just pieces of land — they are stories, ecosystems, and legacies that deserve full, transparent assessment and protection, not exemptions. I support renewable energy development and believe developers must clearly explain project impacts and ensure that benefits flow to local communities. But I'm worried that the current rules under this Bill won't deliver on that promise — and could even be used to delay or block critical renewable projects. Instead, I call on the State Government to fast-track the Renewable Energy Zone framework, support Local Energy Hubs so communities can negotiate fairly with developers, and provide funding to help local councils and residents decide how community benefit funds are used. I also urge the Government to apply the same expectations to resource projects. Communities should retain the right to object, and projects should be subject to the same rigorous requirements — whether it's a coal mine or a solar farm. Right now, a loophole means that a coal mine extracting just under 2 million tonnes per year can avoid full environmental impact assessment, while a 2-hectare solar farm faces tougher scrutiny. That's unfair, inconsistent, and undermines public trust. All developments — whether for the Olympics, energy, or resources — must be assessed thoroughly and transparently for their environmental and community impacts. Queenslanders, and our global visitors in 2032, deserve nothing less.