

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

Submission No:	338
Submitted by:	Daniel Tomlin
Publication:	Making the submission and your name public
Attachments:	See attachment
Submitter Comments:	

Submission to The State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee.

To The Committee,

My Family have produced crops and beef in the Smoky Creek area for nearly 100 years. We are directly impacted by the proposed Smoky Creek solar and battery hybrid complex, therefore I can provide specific comment on this Bill, with particular reference to Renewable Energy Projects particularly in the following areas;

106W Requirements for social impact assessment reports.

SSRC Act 2017 and the SIA Guideline 2018.

‘Community and Stakeholder Engagement’

Social Licence requirements attached to RE projects that mines and all other projects are made to strictly adhere to, appear to be non-existent. Why is this? Why are they currently exempt from compensation in any form, base line soil, water and dust testing pre-construction, EIS and provision of bonds for rehabilitation post deconstruction? Will the new bill change this status quo? Apparently not, as most projects will be approved before any new rules come in. Therefore this bill is totally inadequate if the government aims to prevent the disaster that looms. The Queensland Solar Farm Guidelines that outline social licence requirements are not mandated and therefore useless. In the case of Smoky Creek (and this is common experience with many other communities we have now networked with) we had no community meeting about the project. Confidentiality agreements, unanswered phone calls, emails and phone calls and an objection period over Christmas meant that this project was passed in an underhanded, concealed way. Recently that a whole new BESS has been added to the plans and we were left to find out via public media announcement. The BESS has opened a whole new host of environmental and safety issues, yet not additional approvals or Environmental assessments appear to be legally required. How can this be? This is disgusting and unacceptable, yet there will no doubt be no penalty for the proponent.

‘Workforce Management/ Local Business and Industry Procurement.’

In the media and at public meeting RE proponents insist on their deceptive promises that the projects will bring increased employment and productivity to rural communities. There are now hundreds of living examples that the opposite is true.. Labour is imported from elsewhere, overtaxing small towns that are already stretched for medical care and housing. If ordinary Australians can see the result of the projects on communities and towns, we do not believe any more that the government is unaware of the massive problems arising. We must conclude then that we are simply considered as collateral damage.

‘Housing and Accommodation’

Local safety, peace and town function in our small towns will be totally disrupted once construction of the 80 plus projects begins. All projects will need maintenance and deconstruction at the same time. This is clearly a recipe for disaster. Accommodation and

services, already stretched in Banana Shire will be depleted further. Safety issues for school and the elderly will be of particular concern.

‘Health and Community Wellbeing’

Serious mental health issues arising from RE developments are being consistently ignores. Physical health issues arising from chemical leaching, pesticides, fire retardants, infrasound, EMF and micro plastics from RE developments are now well documented overseas and either the government is ignorant of this information or conscientiously censoring it. I am not sure which of the two is more reprehensible. The ten neighbouring people around the Smoky Creek Project, have between the written more than 400 letters to layers of government and met with numerous politicians and government panels. We have given feedback at Every REZ meeting in Biloela and at the Federal Government Inquiry in Gladstone into the RE Transition. This has been costly on our time and energy, yet we see no results or signs that any of the issues we have raised have been responded to in any way, by any government. We do not have high hope for this luke-warm Bill, or expect any changes to the dire threats we face at Smoky Creek. For a government to be allowing these projects to proceed on their watch, when majority renewables has been such a costly failure in other countries, is beyond belief.

Yours Sincerely,

Daniel Tomlin.