

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

Submission No: 349
Submitted by: Sarah Lejeune
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Submitter Comments:

I am deeply concerned that the Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) Bill sets a dangerous precedent by allowing Olympic developments to override environment and planning law. When the world turns its attention to Queensland for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic games, I want our great state to be celebrated for our natural environment and rich cultural heritage. To ensure international visitors can appreciate our precious natural wonders, like the Great Barrier Reef and iconic local koala populations, we need to take strong climate action while ensuring that all development is properly assessed and well-sited. I am particularly concerned about the implications of this Bill on the Aboriginal cultural heritage at Barrambin (Victoria Park) and the potential environmental impacts at Redlands Whitewater Centre. These sensitive sites must be assessed thoroughly, not exempt from planning and environment laws. I support making sure that renewable energy developers fully articulate the impacts of projects and that benefits flow to the local community. However, I am concerned that these rules may not deliver these benefits and could instead be used to delay or reject renewable projects. I urge the State Government to accelerate the Renewable Energy Zone framework to guide local development, provide further support through Local Energy Hubs so that communities can negotiate effectively with developers, and fund local councils to develop, with communities, investment priorities for community benefit funds. I also urge the Government to apply the same requirements on community benefit agreements to resource projects, and maintain community objection rights for resource projects. I am concerned that there is a loophole allowing a coal mine that extracts less than 2 million tonnes per annum to avoid full environmental impact assessment, whereas a 2 hectares solar farm would be impact assessable and have to deliver a community benefit agreement and social impact assessment report.

All developments should be rigorously assessed for the environmental and community impact – Olympic venues and the resources sector should not get a free pass. I have been an active supporter of environmental issues for over 30 years. For instance, I have coordinated a local bush regeneration group for 30 years- restoring remnant bushland on the Brisbane River.