

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

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Submitter Comments:

I am very concerned that the Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) Bill might allow Olympic developments to bypass environmental and planning laws, potentially setting a dangerous precedent that threatens our natural environment. 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 must take decisive climate action while ensuring that all development is appropriately 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. It is crucial that the Government takes full responsibility for assessing these sensitive sites thoroughly and does not exempt itself from planning and environmental laws. While I support the idea of renewable energy developers fully articulating the impacts of their projects and ensuring benefits for the local community, I am concerned that the current rules may not effectively deliver these benefits. I urge the State Government to expedite the implementation of the Renewable Energy Zone framework. This will not only guide local development but also provide additional support through Local Energy Hubs, enabling communities to negotiate effectively with developers, and fund local councils to develop community investment priorities for community benefit funds. I also urge the Government to apply the exact requirements on community benefit agreements to resource projects and maintain community objection rights for resource projects. It is essential that a loophole does not allow a coal mine that extracts less than 2 million tonnes per annum to avoid a complete environmental impact assessment, while a 2-hectare solar farm would be impact assessable and must deliver a community benefit agreement and a social impact assessment report. In conclusion, I strongly urge the Government to reconsider its approach to all development. It is imperative that all development, including Olympic venues and the resources sector, is rigorously assessed for its environmental and community impact. No project should be exempt from this scrutiny.