

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

**Submission No:** 402  
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### Submitter Comments:

I am horrified by the proposal to suspend legislation in Planning (Social Impact & Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This proposal is anti-democratic and makes me wonder what country we are living in. This is straight out of the Trump (or Putin) play-book. Our laws are there to ensure that matters such as environment and heritage are properly protected in a transparent way and by providing community engagement. How embarrassing to stage an Olympics games in front of the whole world which will clearly show that we have no respect for endangered species such as the koala and the indigenous heritage values as found in Victoria Park. Surely the fact that 15 pieces of legislation have had to be changed to enable these projects is a clear indication that they do not stand up to scrutiny. Koalas are a symbol of Australian wildlife, recognised worldwide. They are currently listed as endangered under both the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) and the Nature Conservation Act 1992 (Qld). The amendments proposed in this bill run contrary to those responsibilities and will push the koala further toward extinction. While the State has mapped koala habitat and priority habitat, Olympic infrastructure and other state projects are planned to significantly impact this. If the Birkdale Whitewater Centre is to be dumped in the middle of the vital Tingalpa Creek koala corridor which leads all the way up to Mt Cotton, there will be negative impacts on koalas from multiple perspectives:

- Loss of habitat and individual preferred trees will impact the established home ranges of koalas and other wildlife
- Both the impact on koala habitat and construction of the Whitewater Centre will change or sever existing travel routes and movement corridors for wildlife
- This will increase the distance that koalas must travel which will likely increase their required nutrient intake in an already challenging environment and increase mortality from car strikes, domestic dog attacks, disease and territorial challenges.
- Already fragile populations will become further isolated, further eroding genetic diversity.
- This will increase the risk of local extinctions which will further impact the viability of koalas across the state.

The Birkdale Whitewater site has three sides directly adjacent to the statutory protected Koala Habitat and thus blatantly contravenes the Olympic Principles. Clause 15.3 of the Olympic Host Contract Principles 2032 specifically states: Where new permanent venues need to be constructed, the Hosts, the Host NOC and the OCOG shall ensure that they are not located in or adjacent to statutory nature, cultural protected areas or World Heritage Sites. The Olympic Host Requirements mandate avoiding permanent structures in protected areas and prioritizing previously developed sites. This is especially true of the Victoria Park site. As Brisbane's largest inner-city park, Victoria Park provides vital green space in a city already lacking in such areas. A stadium would significantly reduce this public amenity. There are mature native trees in this park which pre-date European settlement and date to pre-1750. Its history abounds with importance not only to the Indigenous people but the early and post war history of Brisbane. The Bill introduces a fast-tracked cultural heritage scheme that limits consultation and allows default plans without the agreement of Traditional Owners. Similarly, the Birkdale Whitewater site is important for its links with WWII history. Access to the Courts is a basic right of all Queenslanders. The Bill proposes to remove this right with sweeping provisions in relation to Olympics venues and villages. Exemption from court review violates The Rule of Law (equality before the law) and Separation of Powers (Judicial Review). Removing these checks and balances can easily lead to official corruption (real and perceived). Whose community benefits from these changes? Certainly not the community where I live which values our koalas and the precious green spaces in the region. Avoidance of good governance processes for building Olympic stadiums will be looked upon eagerly by the property development industry as a precedent

for additional law changes to further streamline the process of getting projects approved in Queensland (which already has the most flexible and developer-friendly planning laws in Australia). It is ironic that the State Government appears to want to slow down approval of renewable energy projects by requiring the proponents to “build social licence by demonstrating how projects will deliver long-term benefits for affected communities” and yet wants to expedite Olympic venues that, far from building social licence have created so much angst and division within the community. In summary I implore you to:

1. Ensure that all Olympic developments remain subject to existing Queensland laws, like all other developments.
2. Ensure that all laws pertaining to Environment Protection, Conservation, and Cultural Heritage Protection in particular are applied to Olympic developments and that the community’s democratic right to participate in development application decision-making is protected and preserved.
3. Remove the proposed Redlands Whitewater Centre from the 2032 Olympic Venue Plan in favour of using the existing Penrith Whitewater Stadium in NSW, for the people of the Redlands do not want it and never have.
4. Ensure that the legislation places no higher burden of justification on renewables projects than other projects of similar scale, recognising the potential seriousness of consequences of impeding them.