

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

**Submission No:** 596  
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**Publication:** Making the submission and your name public  
**Attachments:** No attachment

### Submitter Comments:

Dear committee members, As a concerned local resident living within Rockhampton Regional Council and State electorate of Flynn, here is my perspective on the lack of state legislation and lack of appropriate town planning developmental approval available to local communities to protect themselves from the onslaught of Renewable Energy schemes being rushed through by developers, regardless of the negative impacts on stakeholders, landholders, neighbours, communities. We live within 1.5km of a proposed BESS (J Pierce Rd BESS). Our township of Gracemere, which I have resided in for nearly 40 years is within 3km of this proposed BESS of 500 shipping containers of batteries to be used to store energy from renewable energy projects also designated for the local area. The surrounding properties to this BESS proposal are large residential, rural residential, small rural businesses. It is situated by a creek that feeds directly into wetlands of west Yeppen floodplain and the Great Barrier Reef. It is not an industrial zone for hazardous materials or dangerous goods. Yet, BESS associated with Renewable energy is designated as 'Undefined' in the outdated local planning scheme so there are no appropriate checks and balances against approvals. The local council already faces possible litigation from other BESS developers when council voted against an unsuitable site for our neighbouring small community of Bouldercombe to have a BESS situated directly next to a residential street on prime cropping land. Appropriate legislation could protect local councils from having to fight developers in court using rate payer funds to protect communities from renewable energy developers whose only concern is the convenience of their chosen location to develop these Renewables and not the impacts on the surrounding neighbours, communities and environment. Farming, mining, other industries require a multi-page documentation for material change of use or development application, or even a residential owner wanting a building approval. How is it that these often foreign owned companies with no community ties, and purely profit driven, are able to have almost unrestricted access to any Renewable energy development? These developers are pushing through Renewable projects at great speed, knowing they can cherry pick their location with little resistance whilst there is no protective legislation in place for communities. Communities often hear of these Renewables energy developments last, sometimes too late in the approval process to do anything about them. There needs to be very clear community consultation when projects are going to affect the livelihoods and livability of regions for entire generations. Communities, small business and families now live in fear of what will be the next discovery of yet another industrial scale land take-over by a renewable energy scheme that will impact every day of the rest of their lives. We just don't know or have access to all the non-disclosure deals being made behind closed doors, even when directly impacted by having industrialization occurring on a boundary fence line. We see solar and wind renewable developments and their associated BESS battery storage, sub stations and transmission lines being marketed to the general populace as the "green" solution to save the planet. In reality, it is another get rich quick scheme to create foreign wealth. Locals in the regions see the massive scale of prime land degradation and destruction caused by renewables. How is it the heavily forested hills, the carbon sinks that are the trees, suddenly hold no value in the face of a monolithic wind turbine? We need legislation to protect the environment and communities from renewable projects being put on sites that are convenient for the developers but which are soul destroying for the people that call the places home and are forced to watch their little piece of paradise they worked hard for all their lives being degraded in front of their eyes. Coal continues to be exported for cheap power overseas, whilst we see agricultural land and forests being destroyed by renewable projects. So much for the spin of saving the planet, the only winners are those who are profiting from this farce. These

developers and big business who are profiting from millions of dollars of revenue, then throw a pittance of their profits into 'community benefit funds'. Nowhere near what would be required to actually compensate for what has been lost. It is no more than a marketing ploy to appear to care, bribery for local support, another means to divide and conquer the local communities. If the renewable sector were genuine, they would provide long lasting substantial infrastructure to benefit communities for generations to come to compensate for the damage done. We need legislation to protect for the future, when the renewable energy projects and associated BESS reach the end of life in 10, 20 or 30 years. Who holds the companies to account for appropriate decommissioning of sites? How do Renewables propose to realistically repurpose sites when whole mountain tops have been removed, the surrounding land is covered in micro plastics shed from wind turbine blades and solar panels, concrete foundation blot the countryside, thousands of solar pilons driven over 6m into the earth cover the agricultural land in a metal forest, toxins from BESS fires enter the environment. There appears to be no legislation to hold Renewables to account for destroying local soil or groundwater. Perhaps that is why they lease land and not buy it for projects. They are literally leaving the problems behind in someone else's backyard. In conclusion, as I sit here in our little tin shed house while my toddler sleeps and her sibling is due any day now. Wondering what their future holds. Hoping there is still hope for the next generation to be protected by improved legislation. We are lucky to be surrounded by 40ha of peace and serenity, listening to the dawn chorus and watching the sun's rays filter through the 100 year old gum trees, but for how long? Words seem futile in the face of foreign owned renewable companies marching mercilessly unrestrained by legislation across our region and decimating local communities in their wake. Renewables are being sold to the population as the solution, whilst in reality bequeathing large scale environmental, agricultural and community vandalism. However, many projects have not yet commenced construction. There is still time to halt the damage with appropriate protective legislation. Yours sincerely, Karan Robinson