

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

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Submitted by: [REDACTED]
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Submitter Comments:

We feel that full risk assessments and impact studies should be undertaken before they are approved in built up areas. Just because there is infrastructure in the area that they can be connected to is not always the best options for the communities impacted by these decisions. The introduction of a social impact assessment as part of the development assessment process for the Planning Act is imperative. Strong guidelines should be developed/implemented for the consideration of how the assessment will be conducted and reviewed. In our experience, the information provided by the developer (or applicant) has not always fully reflected the on-the-ground reality, which raises concerns about the reliability of such assessments. There must also be stronger requirements for genuine and effective community engagement throughout the planning process. All solar farms should go through impact assessable development processes. These assessments must consider the broader environmental effects, not just what happens on the development site. In some cases, the wider environmental impact of solar farms has not been properly evaluated. I support the overall goals of the proposed changes to the Planning Act legislation. However, I strongly recommend providing clearer guidelines for how the Social Impact Assessment will be assessed and the criteria on which the assessment is based. I support the intent of the proposed changes to the Planning Act, but it's important to ensure that developers are held accountable for providing accurate information.