

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

Submission No: 664
Submitted by: Colin Scobie
Publication:
Attachments:
Submitter Comments:

From: [REDACTED]
To: [State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee](#)
Cc: [Redcliffe Electorate Office](#)
Subject: Proposed changes
Date: Tuesday, 20 May 2025 8:56:45 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my strong objection to the proposed 'Planning (Social Impact & Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025' and wish to share the following concerns. I have also copied the Hon Kerri-Anne Dooley MP on this correspondence.

It is crucial that all developments related to the 2032 Brisbane Olympics remain subject to the existing Queensland Planning laws, particularly those designed for the protection of our environment, conservation efforts, and cultural heritage.

The community's fundamental democratic right to participate in the development application process must be preserved. Removing this right would severely undermine public trust in the integrity of our planning system.

I am particularly concerned by the bill's proposal to exempt projects associated with the 2032 Brisbane Olympics from core environmental and planning laws. This step backward in environmental responsibility is deeply troubling, especially at a time when we can least afford it. In its current form, this bill could have profound and irreversible negative consequences for Queensland's environment, with a significant impact on the survival of the koala, one of our most iconic and endangered species.

Koalas are a widely recognised symbol of Australian wildlife. 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 contradict our responsibilities under these acts and will only push koalas closer to extinction.

Despite the State's mapping of koala habitat and priority habitat areas, Olympic infrastructure and other state projects are planned in ways that will significantly impact these crucial zones. Further weakening environmental standards will have a detrimental effect on koalas from multiple perspectives:

- Loss of habitat and individual preferred trees will disrupt the established home ranges of koalas and other wildlife, with the koala serving as a key indicator species.
- The removal of habitat and construction activities will alter or sever existing travel routes and movement corridors essential for wildlife.
- This will force koalas to travel greater distances, likely increasing their need for nutrients in an already challenging environment and raising the risk of mortality from car strikes, domestic dog attacks, disease, and territorial conflicts.
- Already fragile koala populations will become more isolated, further reducing genetic diversity.
- This will heighten the risk of local extinctions, which will have a broader negative impact on the viability of koalas across the state.

Koala populations in Queensland have already suffered a catastrophic decline over the past

two decades due to habitat loss. Many areas across South-East Queensland now have decimated and fragmented habitats, increasingly at risk of being unable to support viable koala populations. The proposed relaxation of planning and environmental safeguards will only exacerbate this critical situation.

Fundamental conservation safeguards must not be bypassed for short-term political gains. It is essential that this bill is not passed and that the integrity of our environmental laws is maintained, including comprehensive environmental scrutiny for all Olympic-related and state-prioritised projects.

Furthermore, I urge the implementation of additional safeguards as part of the SEQ Koala Conservation Strategy to:

- Significantly decrease the amount of full and partial clearing of koala habitat and priority development areas.
- Substantially increase funding for the restoration of koala habitat, wildlife corridors, and wildlife movement infrastructure.

The Queensland Government has both a legal and a moral responsibility to protect our koalas for future generations. Approving a bill that prioritises short-term gains at the expense of permanent environmental degradation and species loss is not in the public interest. Allowing this bill to pass would signal a lack of commitment from the Queensland Government to protect our most vulnerable species and a willingness to trade this iconic animal for infrastructure.

Once these habitats are lost, they are irreplaceable. Once koalas become extinct in the wild, no Olympic medal, infrastructure project, or political achievement can bring them back. Their extinction would be a national disgrace and an irreversible loss for future generations. Short-term economic and political interests must not take precedence over long-term ecological stewardship and biodiversity conservation.

I implore the Queensland Parliament to act in the best interests of future generations, biodiversity, moral decency, and the very identity of our state. Please protect our koalas—do not pass this bill. Short-term expediency must not outweigh the long-term health of our environment and wildlife.

Sincerely,

Colin Scobie

