



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE

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PLANNING (INCLUSIONARY ZONING STRATEGY) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (5.30 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased that we are debating the Planning (Inclusionary Zoning Strategy) Amendment Bill 2023 today. This bill amends the Planning Act so that the minister can enact an inclusionary zoning strategy urgently. The strategy would require 25 per cent of the dwellings in all new large developments to be allocated for use as public housing. After decades of underinvestment in public housing by both Labor and the LNP, this bill provides a model to rapidly expand the amount of public housing in Queensland. This plan would help those Queenslanders who are struggling with the housing crisis. It would help the over 40,000 people on the social housing register and, given the way the current government is going, those people often wait years for a home.

A strategy like this is only necessary because for decades both Labor and the LNP have underinvested in public housing. As of December last year, there were 43,000 people on the social housing register. Those people are waiting for 24,000 homes. Productivity Commission data shows that Labor has built only 1,845 homes since 2015. The current plan is to build just 2,205 homes a year, out to 2046. In my own electorate, a block of social housing was demolished at the end of 2022 and still there is no new housing there. Even if no additional person is added to the social housing register under Labor's current plan, it will still take a little over a decade to house those 43,000 people who are waiting for social housing. Despite the scale of the housing crisis, the ambitions of this government are very low. Labor has no plans to freeze or cap rent increases. They have no plans for a vacancy levy, no plans to limit Airbnb and short-term accommodation and no meaningful plans for mandatory inclusionary zoning.

I want to thank those Queenslanders, stakeholders and experts who wrote to the committee inquiring into this bill, to share their support for inclusionary zoning. Ninety-three per cent of the submissions supported mandatory inclusionary zoning in some form. The Community Housing Industry Association of Queensland wrote—

... Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning (MIZ) would increase the supply of social and affordable housing. MIZ would assist in responding to the housing crisis ... as part of a suite of measures.

In their submission, Kurilpa Futures wrote—

Inclusionary Zoning provides an effective tool to forestall recurrent housing affordability crises and advance social justice and efficiency, to meet predictable accommodation needs.

Kurilpa Futures based their support on the enormous success of inclusionary zoning in other parts of the world, stating that inclusionary zoning—

... is being widely adopted in the UK, USA, Canada and Australia, and in many other mixed economy societies. In the UK for the last decade a figure of 25% has been mandated for designated areas.

The Queensland Council of Social Service talked about the scale of the housing crisis, writing—

Queensland's housing system is under unprecedented pressure.

...

... 100,000 households across Queensland have unmet housing needs.

QCOSS went on to say—

This level of investment is insufficient to maintain the status quo—that is, to prevent further deterioration beyond the current situation.

They also said—

QCOSS supports introducing meaningful inclusionary zoning to obligate private developers to increase the supply of social and affordable housing in Queensland.

In fact, 107 of the 114 submissions on this bill supported inclusionary zoning in some form.

Inclusionary zoning is not a new concept. In fact, inclusionary zoning is already part of government policy; it is just not being enacted. The Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-20 Action Plan states an aim to—

Where surplus state land is developed for residential purposes, introduce inclusionary requirements so a proportion (5—25%) of new dwellings will be designated for social and affordable housing.

The Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025 states that the government will 'Investigate introducing inclusionary planning requirements into the planning framework'.

The government has also launched an Inclusionary Planning Pilot Program that we were very excited to hear about until we looked at the details. The pilot will not deliver public housing or social housing. Rather, it seems like the pilot is testing different kickbacks and support for developers that they can get access to if they 'aim' for a target of 20 per cent affordable housing so that 20 per cent is not even mandatory. The expression of interest form states—

The pilot projects will aim for around 20% affordable housing products by using various incentives such as density bonuses and alternative car parking rates to test the commerciality of different models.

At the core of this proposal is kickbacks for developers to ensure that developers keep making decent profits. To be clear, despite an inclusionary zoning policy being established by the government way back in 2017, we have yet to see any houses delivered under that policy. The government's plan for inclusionary planning is actually just more kickbacks for developers, with an aspirational target, no requirements for public housing and no clear definition or mandate for what 'affordable' means.

The kickbacks to developers do not end there. In February, the Premier and housing minister announced a \$350 million slush fund for developers for urban infill with no requirement that that urban infill include social and public housing. The plan includes waiving infrastructure charges for developers. Councils are already struggling to deliver the local infrastructure needed to support growing communities and this plan will only make it worse. At the moment, my colleague the member for Maiwar has introduced a private member's bill into parliament to remove the cap on infrastructure charges for developers, responding to the fact that councils are struggling to pay for essential services and infrastructure. It is mind-blowing that the state government would even contemplate going in the other direction and give developers discounts on infrastructure charges.

This bill provides just one model for how we can help plug this gap. The inclusionary zoning strategy bill would require the government to give something back to Queenslanders. The bill would introduce mandatory inclusionary zoning into Queensland and would require that 25 per cent of developments of more than 10 lots be reserved for public housing. To be clear, this is not about getting something for free. In the last sitting week, the member for Kawana called our amendment to include inclusionary zoning in state facilitated developments 'communism', but the only people getting something for free are property developers and the real estate lobby.

This year, the Labor state government and the LNP City Council worked together to approve a temporary local planning instrument that allows buildings of unlimited heights in South Brisbane. Property developers and landowners will make huge profits from those unlimited heights and massive increases in land values. Essentially, they are getting money for nothing and there is no requirement for the developers taking advantage of the TLPI to build any public housing.

The Greens have been taking our lead from the community and from experts who are telling us loud and clear that unless we freeze and cap rent increases, put in place a vacancy levy and inclusionary zoning, build tens of thousands of new public homes and introduce measures like

mandatory inclusionary zoning then the public housing crisis will only get worse. Of course, inclusionary zoning will not work alone. We still need to freeze and cap rent increases to help the 1.7 million Queenslanders who rent, many of whom are facing rent increases that they cannot afford which will mean an eviction notice. We still need to tax vacant properties to make sure that thousands of empty homes right across Queensland are being used to house people. We need to limit Airbnb and short-term accommodation, which is displacing people from long-term homes. The government needs to directly build tens of thousands of new, secure public homes. We need to scrap tax breaks for property investors and we need to introduce mandatory inclusionary zoning to rapidly expand the amount of public housing in Queensland.

I look forward to the debate. I look forward to support from any member in the House who genuinely cares about ending the housing crisis in Queensland.