



Speech By  
**Hon. Grace Grace**


**MEMBER FOR MCCONNELL**

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Record of Proceedings, 20 March 2024

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

### **Message from Governor**

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.11 am): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The message from Her Excellency recommends the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I now table the message for the information of members.

#### MESSAGE

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024

*Constitution of Queensland 2001*, section 68

I, DR JEANNETTE ROSITA YOUNG AC PSM, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—


A Bill for an Act to amend the Economic Development Act 2012, the Planning Act 2016 and the Public Sector Act 2022 for particular purposes

#### GOVERNOR

Date: 20 March 2024

*Tabled paper:* Message, dated 20 March 2024, from Her Excellency the Governor recommending the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 [405](#).

### **Introduction**

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.12 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Economic Development Act 2012, the Planning Act 2016 and the Public Sector Act 2022 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 [406](#).

*Tabled paper:* Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, explanatory notes [407](#).

*Tabled paper:* Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights [408](#).

Queensland is growing. It was May 2018 when Queensland's population hit five million. Today, according to the Queensland Government Statistician, our population stands at 5.56 million people. This growth is just shy of relocating the entire population of Tasmania into Queensland, most of them in south-eastern Queensland, over a six-year period.

Without a doubt, people are moving to Queensland because it is the place to be due to the economic success and job opportunities this government is delivering. We have restored frontline services cut by the previous LNP government. We protected Queensland from the worst aspects of COVID, both from a health and economic perspective. Our economy has grown year on year, and we have had record low unemployment and continue to record strong interstate migration into our great state.

However, that success also brings its challenges, and one of those challenges is the pressure placed on housing supply. While there have never been so many people in Queensland in good jobs with low unemployment rates, at the same time we see pressures on housing supply and rental increases due in part to recent unprecedented interest rate rises at a national level and, sadly, some people sleeping rough. By 2046, we need around a million new homes to house our growing population.

Through our Homes for Queenslanders policy, the Miles government has made it clear that every Queenslanders should have a safe, secure and affordable place to call home. All levels of government—federal, state and local—have a role to play in achieving that objective, but so, too, does the private sector, community housing providers and financial services and real estate providers. The factors driving the housing challenges are complex and there is no simple solution to resolving those challenges.

The Miles government is committed to using every lever at our disposal to identify solutions and implement them, and this includes all government agencies. This bill is about the Miles government pulling one of those levers, building on the role of Economic Development Queensland—EDQ—the Queensland government's land use planning and property development agency, and putting it to even better use to deliver more homes for Queenslanders faster.

One of the actions of the historic housing summit was to expand the remit of EDQ, to drive the delivery of social, affordable and diverse housing in the context of urban renewal and precincts, and we are driving this initiative with EDQ-led projects in Northshore Hamilton, Carseldine and Southport. EDQ has been charged with leading actions to increase the supply of social and affordable housing. It is all part of our Homes for Queenslanders plan. Stakeholders from planning, the development industry, professional services, community housing and public agency partners have worked with us on exploring ways to do things differently to get more homes built faster.

This bill will: increase the supply of quality, social and affordable housing where it is needed across the state; build capacity of government and the housing sector to deliver tailored social and affordable housing outcomes in a flexible manner; leverage government intervention to maximise industry capability, alternative delivery models and funding sources; deliver within accelerated time scales; and require developers to deliver on social and affordable targets that are supportive of a broader statewide strategy.

To achieve this, this bill focuses on four key areas: housing supply, affordability and diversity; the introduction of a place renewal framework; EDQ's corporate structure; and operational refinements to existing functions and powers. The bill is focused on outcomes that will enable EDQ to deliver more homes faster in a way that also delivers thriving communities with jobs, services and everyday facilities close to home. This bill directly supports two of the key pillars of the Miles government's Homes for Queenslanders policy—to build more homes faster and to boost our social housing big build.

EDQ has achieved much, from land sales that translated into major private sector investment and the creation of thousands of jobs for Queenslanders to helping industry by master planning communities and streamlining approvals processes. Northshore Hamilton, for example, is Queensland's largest waterfront urban renewal development where over 3,000 homes have already been delivered. EDQ has been pivotal in working towards building a sustainable, connected precinct that will ultimately house more than 25,000 people in 14,000 homes.

PDAs are parcels of land within Queensland identified for development to deliver significant benefits to the community. Northshore is one of 35 priority development areas that have been declared across the state to unlock land supply. Caloundra South PDA on the Sunshine Coast is another. EDQ has been instrumental in supporting development of this new greenfield community and has already approved over 20,000 lots for homes, with 7,000 already delivered, and a further 13,000 either approved for development or under construction. This development has proved especially popular for first home buyers and workers in essential services with half of the lots sold in 2023 purchased by these groups. In just the first half of 2023-24, almost 2,400 residential lots and over 1,900 apartment dwellings were approved for development in priority development areas. This is on top of the more than 2,700 residential lots and 750 apartment dwellings that were approved in 2022-23. As well as enabling housing development, these streamlined approvals will facilitate \$736 million of private sector investment and support 2,380 jobs.

EDQ is supporting hundreds of new homes in urban renewal precincts like Songbird Oxley, Parkside Yeronga and Carseldine Village, which has delivered 100 per cent net zero energy emission terrace homes, and in greenfield precincts like Greater Flagstone, Ripley Valley and Yarrabilba to name a few. They are co-investing with councils, developers and utility providers in critical infrastructure like water and roads to unlock residential lots, like at Oonoonba in the Far North and Yarrabilba in the south.

We are finding places for businesses to grow and creating new jobs for Queenslanders—for example, from the delivery by EDQ of more industrial land at the Sunshine Coast and Coolum eco industrial parks, and business innovation parks like the EDQ-led Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct, Lumina. In Bowen Hills great outcomes have been achieved, including the delivery of more homes and businesses and the redevelopment of the RNA Showgrounds. There are parts of the Bowen Hills PDA where greater coordination would create more homes and places that the community can enjoy. This bill will help to do that. This bill will support EDQ to deliver an additional 1,300 dwellings over the next five years as well as approve a further 15,000 homes in priority development areas—effectively doubling the amount currently forecast.

The bill also enables EDQ to play a more meaningful role in the provision of social and affordable housing. Queensland's growth means that we need to ensure there is enough housing, and the right housing, for everyone. The bill includes amendments to the main purpose of the act to specifically include the provision of diverse housing, including social housing and affordable housing. This amendment is not only important from a practical perspective but also sends an important signal. It reinforces the role that EDQ plays in driving new housing supply across the state.

The bill will enable the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to enter directly into agreements with third parties, like community housing providers, to deliver social and affordable housing projects. This will make it easier for EDQ to lead the delivery, in partnership with the housing portfolio, of new social housing projects like the proposed new West Tower development at Southport. This supportive housing project will provide a home to hundreds of vulnerable Queenslanders, with access to onsite health and employment services.

These new powers will complement the powers of the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works by providing additional capacity across government to respond to the housing challenge. EDQ already sets targets for social and affordable housing within PDAs. The bill will improve the government's ability to plan the location and require delivery of these targets, while giving EDQ and industry more flexibility for how these obligations are conditioned and met to ensure the right type of housing is delivered when and where it is needed. The bill also acknowledges the role of EDQ in delivering commercial and industrial land to market which will help ensure we are building jobs as well as homes for Queenslanders.

Our next focus area for these amendments is called place renewal areas. It is a chance to bring more coordinated renewal sooner to some of Queensland's greatest development opportunities. In some of our PDAs there are multiple parties developing complex infrastructure and development projects where a more coordinated and collaborative approach will deliver a better outcome faster, in particular where there are multiple landowners and fragmented ownership. For example, the Bowen Hills priority development area is a key inner-urban site that has significant government and private sector investment. It includes major precincts like the RNA and is a transport hub, thanks to the Bowen Hills Railway Station and the new Cross River Rail Exhibition station. But there are areas within Bowen Hills where multiple development and infrastructure projects are proposed that are not progressing, for different reasons, and that would benefit from stronger coordination between government and the private sector.

This bill enables the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to declare a place renewal area within a priority development area. This will give the minister broad coordination powers to drive better outcomes. This is about finding new ways to work across industry and government to respond to challenges and seize opportunities and is another example of EDQ demonstrating innovation. The framework will set out the vision, purpose and outcomes of the precinct and will be prepared in a collaborative way with government, community and industry stakeholders to deliver increased value and a better place-based outcome for the precinct. In addition, the bill allows the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to acquire land in a place renewal area where there is a barrier to progressing critical development and all other options have been exhausted.

Our final focus area is improving EDQ's corporate structure, accountability and governance and improving the effective and efficient function of EDQ. For example, the bill includes expanding the minister's existing directions power to include distributor-retailers and providing EDQ with similar land acquisition powers for the delivery of critical infrastructure within PDAs that are provided to other similar planning authorities like local governments and the Coordinator-General.

The bill will also require distributor-retailers and local governments to inform the Minister for Economic Development Queensland of certain infrastructure charges they have collected within a PDA and, in some cases, provide those charges to the minister so they can ensure those funds are spent on infrastructure within the area they are collected. Amendments are also included in the bill to provide flexibility around planning instruments. This includes, for example, if there has been a significant weather event within a priority development area, the ability for a temporary planning instrument to be put in place quickly to assist.

Regarding EDQ's structure, it will continue to be accountable to the Minister for Economic Development Queensland but it will no longer sit within a government department. This will create a more agile and responsive organisation that can scale up to respond to key government priorities as required and allow for approvals and processes to be further streamlined. A chief executive officer will be appointed and a new EDQ employing office will be established. EDQ staff will become employees of the employing office and all remaining and future staff will be employed under the Public Sector Act 2022, with all their rights and entitlements under it retained.

A new eight-member skill-based board accountable to the MEDQ will be appointed. The board will include two government board members—the chief executive of the minister's department and the Under Treasurer—but for the first time the board will also include external experts including an independent chair. The MEDQ's regulatory functions, such as approving development applications or declaring new PDAs, will remain with the minister, but for development projects and day-to-day operations this will give EDQ greater direct access to development industry expertise for strategic leadership.

Delivering more diverse and affordable housing in an accelerated time frame is vital for our state, is in line with our Homes for Queenslanders plan and is in direct response to the Housing Summit. EDQ will be given the powers and abilities to deliver the outcomes needed for Queensland. By implementing the changes in this bill, EDQ will be better placed to fast-track sustainable and affordable places that people can call home. I commend the bill to the House.

### **First Reading**

**Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.29 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### **Referral to Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee**

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee.