




Speech By
Bryson Head

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

Record of Proceedings, 25 June 2025

**PLANNING (SOCIAL IMPACT AND COMMUNITY BENEFIT) AND OTHER
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (7.44 pm): I will briefly respond to the final comment from the member for Bulimba. Public consultation is the vast majority of what this bill brings into legislation. This bill and what it delivers to Queensland highlights the most important issue for the people of Callide. I have had many thousands of conversations with constituents and there have been phone calls and correspondence to my office. From this, it is clear that the status quo is not working for Queensland. It is not working for rural and regional Queensland—the communities that are the backbone of this state and that generate significant wealth and prosperity for our country. These many conversations have influenced how I go about advocating for the people of Callide.

I have had lengthy conversations with the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer and energy minister about what is needed for the pathway in Queensland. It is fantastic to be part of a government that is making the changes needed to align with community expectations. The reality is: I would need hours to properly articulate in this House the varying and conflicting views of the constituents of Callide and the experiences people have had. Having heard of their experiences, I very much feel for those constituents who have been in various fights. I also appreciate that some landholders are seeking the economic opportunities that might come with solar and wind projects. Realistically, I could probably write a book about it. There are numerous challenges, concerns and opportunities. I will just touch on them, because in the time I have that is all I will be able to do.

Firstly, why did I come to this parliament? One of my key principles is my belief in the property rights that underpin what this nation was built upon. I am incredibly passionate about rural and regional Queensland. I have been fortunate to live in another country. Canada is a fantastic place, but in my time living there I could not help but remind myself how great Australia is and the communities I grew up in on the Darling Downs. I support the industries that underpin our national sovereignty and prosperity. I spend a lot of time fighting greenie activists. They call themselves greenies but sometimes you question how green they really are. I am a believer in the free market. That is my background and they are the principles that bring me to this place. That does underpin what I am trying to do in helping the electorate of Callide navigate the future when it comes to all energy sources, including solar and wind developments.

What tears a community apart is when someone takes away its future. We saw that with the previous government saying that they backed in the workers at our coal-fired power stations. They said that they had a job security guarantee, within which were relocation packages. The people who work at those power stations and in those communities want to live there. They do not want to pack their bags and move somewhere else. That is why we need a future in those communities.

Changes with due process that significantly change the landscapes of those communities also tear them apart, as do unanswered questions. Many community members have a lot of questions that have never been answered, and they deserve those answers. I work with developers for solar and wind

projects. I sit down with them and relay a lot of those questions. Some companies are very good and have the facts and information and are working to address the concerns. Others are not. I say to those that are not: you had better get working if you want a future in Callide.

Of course, there has been a lack of consultation. Callide has been at the forefront of previous industry developments by companies that nearly lost their social licence because they came in to steamroll communities and they thought they could get away with it. That is not something that I will stand by and watch. My focus for the people of Callide is very outcome driven. It is about a future for our communities. It is about cohesive communities. It is about neighbours that want to get on with one another. I have spent a lot of time working with potential developers and I tell them that if they want me to support their project then they need to make sure their neighbours and the community are on board with that project. I acknowledge that some companies have gone to lengths to work with their neighbours and the community, but some have not.

Farming is tough. Farmers have to deal with a lot of red tape. I appreciate that some landholders want to seek other economic opportunities for their land. In some instances, some farmers have land that is not very good for farming and they want to use it for other things. Where appropriate, we should support them in that. Agricultural land is precious and we need to look after it. We need to make sure that we have a good approach to do that. We have cities built on prime farmland, we have coalmines built on farmland and now we have renewable projects also built on farmland, but there is only so much of it so we have to consider all industries and the impacts of human development when progressing.

Importantly, we have to listen. I spent a lot of time, with my office staff, phone canvassing and contacting many people across the electorate. Over a period last year, we had over 1,500 conversations with constituents where we had their contact details. It was interesting to hear that the electorate is relatively supportive of solar power but very much against wind power. When it comes to those projects being constructed in their backyard or in their community, they are generally opposed, but there are also mixed views and some do support it. I did that to try to inform my decision-making.

I want to read out some of the comments that people made. Some said that they like that more energy options are being explored. Others said that there has been no consultation with their communities and that things happen without anyone's knowledge and then there is no comeback. Others said there does not seem to be consultation with the local community and companies seem to do whatever they want. Another said that they are not keen to neighbour it. Someone else said renewable energy is good and it provides different options. Those comments came from constituents of Callide and it shows that there is a broad range of views across the electorate.

I wanted to quote some of the things said at the Biloela hearing, but I will not have time to do that. I thank the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee and the chair for coming to Biloela. Importantly, I thank every individual who turned up at the Biloela public hearing for this important legislation. Their attendance shows how important this change is and will be for that community. I thank everyone who gave evidence there. I appreciate their passion. To the tenacious 10, I am sure I will hear from you into the future. As I said recently, we cannot call in Smoky Creek and I know that that is not what they want. However, I do not support making retrospective changes to this and setting that precedent. I know that is not what they want to hear, but I have told them that in writing and I am happy to put it on the parliamentary record, to be up-front and honest with them. Communities deserve their local representatives to be up-front with them, and that is the reality there.

I know that across my communities the councillors and mayors have been working hard to try to ensure that, whatever happens in the future, future mayors and future elected representatives can carry those communities forward. They all want to see a future for their communities. At the end of the day, we need pragmatism, we need a reasoned approach and we need to ensure we use logic in our decision-making. We need to level the playing field and listen to communities. Importantly, we need to talk facts, figures and tangible outcomes. At the end of the day, I am not ideological in how I approach this. I refer to the values that I mentioned at the start, but we need projects that have the right process and are in the right place.