Speech By

Hon. Meaghan Scanlon

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

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

Hon. MAJ SCANLON (Gaven—ALP) (9.52 pm): I rise to speak on the bill before the House. I will start with the issue of community consultation or, more accurately, the complete inconsistency and political convenience that now defines the LNP's approach to it. The LNP have more positions, frankly, on community consultation than a gymnastics final and none of them stick the landing. For the past few years, the LNP have fallen over themselves criticising me and Labor for progressing housing developments in places like Toowoomba, Arundel, Noosa, Tewantin, Wakerley, Redlands—

Mr Stevens: And rightly so.

Ms SCANLON: I hear the interjections: there are probably more that they have objections to—for projects that they deemed as not having sufficient community consultation, but now those so-called community champions have a very different view to stadiums and Olympic infrastructure. They are proposing to completely remove community consultation for Olympic stadiums, arenas, athlete villages and major associated public infrastructure. This is the epitome of hypocrisy, just like the hypocrisy in this bill on renewable energy which will no doubt result in delayed approvals and deter investment.

On the one hand, they want proponents to undertake a process before lodging an application that does not apply to coal and does not apply to gas. It does not even apply to large-scale tourism developments. On the other hand, for solar and wind projects—the very infrastructure that we need to reduce emissions in this state—the bar is suddenly higher. It is a double standard plain and simple. Worse still, it seemingly directly contradicts the Deputy Premier's own ministerial charter letter, which says—

Amend laws to ensure renewable energy projects are impact assessable with approval processes consistent with other land uses like mining and agriculture.

So which is it? The contradictions do not stop there though. This government proposed amendments to this bill which will reduce the minimum consultation period for regional plans. Cutting the time communities have to engage with these complex, long-term frameworks is a step backwards especially when, through the committee process, we heard clear calls for more time, not less.

When it comes to what this bill does for Olympics related developments, the bill overrides nearly every key law designed to protect Queenslanders and the places we love. We have exemptions from the Planning Act, the Environmental Protection Act, the Nature Conservation Act, the Queensland Heritage Act and the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act.

The government's new stadium—the one they said they were not going to build before the election until they changed their mind afterwards—will not need to consider koalas or anything else. Basically, the government is saying, 'Just trust us,' just like we were supposed to trust the member for Bonney, who said before the election that the LNP were going to continue funding the Environmental Defenders Office if successful and then they got in and cut their funding within the first six months.

There are a litany of other concerns experts have raised about this bill, notably by the Queensland Law Society and the Bar Association—and they did not mince their words, did they? I am not surprised that the Deputy Premier did not listen to them because he did listen to them when he was the attorney-general—the worst attorney-general this state ever saw.

Finally, I want to turn to some of the last-minute amendments the LNP are trying to ram through this House once again. One of these changes is to allow development under an infrastructure designation to proceed without the need to comply with a development control plan, including validating development already carried out that did or does not comply. It is very interesting. I am pleased the Deputy Premier is in the House while I am asking some of these questions. The member for Kawana tore up an approval that I gave to the Brisbane Housing Company for an affordable housing project in Birtinya in his electorate claiming it was in contravention with the DCP. Now he is retrospectively approving every other development that might have been allegedly in contravention of the DCP.

Mr Bleijie: Yes, because you unlawfully approved them.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection. 'Yes,' he says. Call me cynical but how does the member for Kawana expect us to believe that after the department considered this affordable housing project and the DCP and recommended that I approve it but then suddenly with a change of government and no interference from the Deputy Premier, who had been publicly railing against this project up until the election, the same public servants—

Mr Bleijie: It was an election commitment.

Mr Dick interjected.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection: it was an election commitment, but he tried to tell us that it was based on the DCP—so which one is it? How does he expect us to believe that the same public servants miraculously found a loophole to help justify the member for Kawana axing this project? No other infrastructure designations were revoked in DCP areas—just this one in the Deputy Premier's electorate. Convenient.

Mr Bleijie: I'm not going to tear down the Sunshine Coast University Hospital, am I?

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjections from the Deputy Premier. Very clearly he has quite a significant interest in this project, so one would ask whether he should have made the decision on this project and what Integrity Commissioner advice he sought on it. Let's be clear: this project was in line with the council plan for the area, yet the Deputy Premier still killed it. However, for every other development, possibly LNP donors—who would know based on their track record—he is fine and today we are passing laws to retrospectively authorise them even if they are contrary to the DCP. They have one rule for luxury developers and another rule for affordable housing.