

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

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The Bill introduced to Qld Parliament this month for Olympic development to have “an expedited pathway by removing the requirements for compliance with relevant Acts...” paves the way for SE Qld koalas to not survive the Olympics (alongside other threatened and endangered species) The 15 planning laws proposed to be voided (including Environmental Protection, Environmental Offsets, Nature Conservation, Vegetation Management, Heritage, Planning) protect our community and natural assets both now and into the future. This breaches Olympic Committee sustainability guidelines, which emphasise creating a legacy of lasting social and environmental benefits, prioritising existing venues and sustainable building practices, and minimising the Games' environmental impact. How can we be sure that by giving Olympic development free reign, it won't have devastating impacts on our koalas? It also sets a dangerous precedent for future projects deemed of commercial interest to the government in power at that point in time (regardless of the actual wishes of the general community). Large development such as proposed by the Olympic developments create difficulty resolving issues or retrofitting; therefore do not confirm to sustainability guidelines. For example, the Birkdale area where a white water stadium and precinct has been proposed for construction is a 'Koala Priority Area'. Land that is mapped as 'Koala Habitat Restoration' and surrounded by 'Core Koala Habitat'. A whitewater facility, lagoon, several hubs, a tree-top walk, coffee shop and even a zip line development similar to Southbank (where there are no koalas!) does not suggest koala protection has been considered during construction nor during/after the games. How will koalas move through their home ranges? Will they be prevented from accessing part/most of the precinct? Will this disruption of their ranges increase the distance travelled, exertion, stress, required nutrient intake and likelihood of territorial incidents; therefore increase in fatal diseases such as chlamydia, koala retroviruses & leukaemia as well as car strikes, dog attacks and the like resulting for their increased movement? How will they be protected from the increased human hazards including traffic, people and dogs (which were depicted in the concept plans). Can it be guaranteed that they won't be able to perish in the bodies of water? If the bill is successful and key pieces of legislation don't apply to Olympic development, how can we be confident that our Qld koalas will not be even more adversely impacted than they have been in recent decades? The whole world is watching. They've already watched and judged Australia harshly for culling koalas from helicopters in Victoria. Now Queensland is very publicly inviting the world to observe how little regard our government actually hold for the welfare and wild survival of the endangered iconic species. Death of koalas is not the ideal Olympic image. Please preserve the protection laws to ensure Olympic development focusses on sustainable efforts utilising existing venues rather than destroying so much of our small remaining nature reserves to build new ones.