

Democracy trashed in new NSW Planning system

The proposed reforms to the NSW Planning system allow some projects to be prohibited from considering the environmental impacts, suitability of a site, the public interest and the social and economic impacts of a project on a locality.

The NSW Government introduced the [Environmental Planning and Assessment \(Planning System Reforms\) Bill 2025](#) into the NSW Parliament on 17 September without public consultation and with no detailed explanatory material. It is expected to be rushed through both Houses of Parliament this year.

The Bill proposes amendments to the State's planning legislation. The NSW Government's stated intention for the Bill is to "deliver more homes through a modern, faster, and fairer planning system for NSW".

This Bill

1. Pretends to be all about creating more homes, but will affect **ALL** types of development – mining, roads, infrastructure
2. Reorients the planning system to promote development
3. Reshapes how community consultation is conducted and reduces a community's impact on planning decisions
4. Takes away under resourced local Councils' autonomy
5. Removes environmental protections and references to conservation, public health and safety from the objects of the Act
6. Diminishes environmental and bushfire risk considerations in decision making
7. Undermines specialist, independent, scientific expert advice
8. Reduces parliamentary oversight – regulations declare what is lawful/unlawful
9. Allows projects to be carved up into smaller parts and prevents consideration of the indirect and cumulative impacts of associated infrastructure and other developments.
10. Requires consideration only of significant likely impacts of a development rather than likely impacts, creating uncertainty. What constitutes significant?
11. The decision makers, the Planning Minister and Planning Secretary have unconstrained power, undermining anti-corruption safeguards recommended by

the Independent Commission Against Corruption

12. Undermines the recent NSW Court of Appeal which found that the impacts of climate change (including downstream emissions) on local communities needed to be considered.
13. Applies to projects that are already in the planning system 12 months after commencement of key provisions of the Act
14. Creates a new mega Development Coordination Authority (DCA) which takes over the NSW Planning Secretary and other key agencies – water, bushfire etc.
15. Centralises power within the DCA and a new Housing Delivery Authority
16. Introduces a new streamlined assessment pathway “Targeted Development Assessment” (TDA)
 - The Planning Minister has unconstrained power to declare a project or class of projects as a TDA
 - Decision makers of TDA projects are prohibited from considering the environmental impacts, suitability of a site, the public interest and the social and economic impacts of a project on a locality.

Contact your NSW Parliament MP and/or their staff.

Ask them to:

1. Ensure this Bill is sent to a multi-party Committee to allow proper scrutiny of its far-reaching impacts
2. Delay voting on the Bill until next year so that the community has more time to understand it
3. Withdraw or drastically amend the Bill to curtail its wide-ranging negative impacts.