



## Fact Sheet No.1: Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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**This fact sheet provides an overview of the proposed amendments to the *Economic Development Act 2012* (the Act) through the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 (the Bill).**

The Queensland Government has set a clear objective: *that every Queenslanders should have access to a safe, secure, and affordable home that meets their needs and enables participation in the social and economic life of our prosperous state.*

Delivering more diverse and affordable housing faster is vital to continuing growth in the state. However, the factors driving the current housing challenges are complex, and therefore the Queensland Government is committed to using every lever at its disposal to identify solutions and implement them.

Building on the role of Economic Development Queensland (EDQ)<sup>1</sup> as one of those levers, EDQ has been tasked with driving the supply of a range of diverse housing, at scale, across the state.

The Bill will achieve this by providing the Minister for Economic Development Queensland (MEDQ) with new and expanded powers to support the delivery of diverse housing in more places. This includes quality social and affordable housing.

By implementing these changes, the Queensland Government will be better placed to deliver on its priorities including good jobs, better services, and a great lifestyle.

### What does the new Bill do?

The new Bill introduces amendments to the Act focussed on four key areas:

1. Housing supply, affordability, and diversity.
2. Introducing a Place Renewal Framework.
3. EDQ's corporate structure and functions.
4. Operational refinements to the functions and powers of the MEDQ.

Building on the Act's current focus of economic and community development, the purpose of the Act will be amended to specifically include providing diverse housing, including quality social and affordable housing.

Its purpose will also be amended to include providing premises for commercial or industrial uses. This recognises EDQ's role in facilitating commercial and industrial development across the state, and its contribution to Queensland's economic development.

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<sup>1</sup> The Minister for Economic Development Queensland (MEDQ) as the corporation sole is the legal entity under the *Economic Development Act 2012*. However, for ease of reference, when addressing the day to day operations of the MEDQ, Economic Development Queensland is used throughout the fact sheet.





## How will the changes respond to Queensland's housing challenges?

The amendments include enabling the MEDQ to enter directly into agreements with third parties, like Community Housing Providers, to deliver social and affordable housing projects. This gives housing providers an alternative pathway to develop social and affordable housing. The MEDQ will require consent from the Chief Executive under the *Housing Act 2003* before entering into an agreement related to social housing.

EDQ will be able to require the delivery of social and affordable housing within some Priority Development Areas (PDAs). This will only occur where the planning framework for the area identifies and quantifies a need for social and affordable housing. The Bill provides flexibility in how developers can deliver on these obligations.

The introduction of Place Renewal Areas will provide for a more coordinated approach to leading the renewal of areas within declared PDAs. Under the new Place Renewal Framework, EDQ will be formally tasked with bringing together government, community, and industry stakeholders to deliver increased value and better place-based solutions, as well as government priorities, such as housing and community outcomes.

## How will EDQ's corporate structure change?

The Bill retains MEDQ as a corporation sole to ensure appropriate government oversight but removes EDQ from the Department of State Development and Infrastructure to allow it to be more agile and able to respond quickly to changing market circumstances. It will operate as a non-departmental statutory body.

A Chief Executive Officer will be appointed to oversee the day-to-day operations of the organisation, and an EDQ Employing Office established. All existing and future EDQ staff will continue to be employed under the *Public Sector Act 2022* retaining their existing rights and entitlements but will transfer to the EDQ Employing Office.

To provide EDQ with greater access to industry expertise and strategic guidance, a new eight-member skills-based decision-making board accountable to the Minister will be appointed. Comprising six independent members, including an independent Chair, government oversight will be maintained with two government members (the Chief Executive of the department that sits within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities and the Under Treasurer). The board will have no decision-making powers in relation to the MEDQ's regulatory functions, such as approving development applications or declaring new PDAs.

The MEDQ, with appropriate approvals (i.e. from Queensland Treasury), will also be able to invest and enter into arrangements that will provide for the efficient long-term investment, ownership and management of property. This may include housing, commercial, and industrial property that align with government priorities and responds to EDQ's purpose and functions.

## How does the Bill make the Act more effective?

Several amendments are operational and process-related and will improve the effective and efficient function of the Act.

These include:

- Changing the process for existing Ministerial directions powers to provide a more consultative approach with the entity being directed.
- Amending the directions powers to clarify that water and sewer utility owners and operators (distributor-retails) can be directed by the Minister in certain circumstances.





- Expanding the directions powers to include the ability for the Minister to direct a relevant entity to provide information.
- Creating temporary planning instruments to respond to urgent circumstances.
- Allowing EDQ to take immediate action to address non-compliance with a development approval where required.
- Amending the infrastructure charging and collection powers in PDAs.

### What is the relationship between the Act and the *Planning Act 2016*?

The MEDQ and the planning framework play complementary roles in increasing housing supply, diversity, and provision of quality social and affordable housing across the state.

In recognition of this, the *Planning Act 2016* is also being amended through the Housing Availability and Affordability (Planning and Other Legislation Amendment) Bill 2023 to boost the supply of housing including affordable housing throughout the state. These amendments to the planning framework include the introduction of a new development assessment pathway to boost affordable housing supply.

While these amendments do not apply to PDAs, they will work in parallel to the amendments proposed in the Act to facilitate the delivery of much needed affordable housing.

### Further information

For more information, please contact Economic Development Queensland via [EDQ@dasilgp.qld.gov.au](mailto:EDQ@dasilgp.qld.gov.au)

