



Our ref: OUT25/4663

17 September 2025

Ms Angela Moody
Productivity Commissioner and Chair
Queensland Productivity and Chair
enquiry@qpc.qld.gov.au

Dear Ms Moody

Economic Development Queensland (EDQ) welcomes the opportunity to provide input into the Queensland Productivity Commission's *Inquiry into Opportunities to Improve Productivity of the Construction Sector*.

As the Queensland Government's land use planning and activation agency, EDQ plays a unique role in Queensland as both a regulator, and land activation agency, unlocking land in Priority Development Areas (PDAs) and on surplus Government land.

As a regulator, EDQ delivers land use and infrastructure planning, catalyst trunk infrastructure funding and development approvals to support the delivery of diverse housing and job creation in PDAs. EDQ supports the construction sector through its role as an enabler of development.

EDQ has considered the Reports' findings relating to Land Use Regulation and notes the specific comments regarding EDQ's role. EDQ has implemented a range of initiatives which directly respond to the report's recommendations to increase the supply of development ready land, reduce regulatory complexity, streamline processes for development approval and increase the accountability and transparency of the performance of development approval processes.

EDQ is committed to responding to some of the challenges highlighted in the Commission's Interim Report and to play a role in improving development efficiency which in turn helps to address housing affordability. Further information regarding EDQ's current priorities is provided in the attached submission.

If you require any further information, please contact Mr Sam Adams, Chief Operating Officer, Economic Development Queensland, by telephone on [REDACTED] or by email at [REDACTED] who will be pleased to assist.

Yours sincerely

Julian Simmonds
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Economic Development Queensland





Economic Development Queensland

Submission to the Queensland Productivity Commission - inquiry into opportunities to improve productivity of the construction sector.

September 2025



Introduction

Economic Development Queensland (EDQ) plays a unique role in Queensland as both a regulator, and land activation agency, unlocking land in Priority Development Areas (PDAs) and on surplus Government land. EDQ supports the construction sector through its role as an enabler of development.

As a regulator, EDQ delivers land use and infrastructure planning, catalyst trunk infrastructure funding and development approvals to support the delivery of diverse housing and job creation in PDAs. EDQ works with councils and the development industry to enable and release greenfield and brownfield land supply to meet growth demands across Queensland.

From large scale growth fronts to urban areas targeted for intensification, EDQ delivers an expedited planning approval pathway and ensures the enabling infrastructure is planned, funded and delivered at the right time, in the right place to support new development.

EDQ also drives the strategic identification, activation, and delivery of surplus or underutilised government-owned land to support Queensland's housing needs. EDQ has established a forward pipeline of development-ready sites, from large-scale urban renewal to targeted infill sites, to bring land to market and enable development in partnership with industry and government stakeholders.

EDQ has noted the Commission's Interim Report (the Report) which outlines that Queensland's system of land use regulations needs to ensure there is enough developable land to meet the demands of Queensland's growing population. EDQ is committed to facilitating new housing supply in locations where people want to live and in diverse forms to meet varying preferences; and in a way that supports construction industry productivity and efficiently utilises infrastructure (page 133).

EDQ is taking several steps to support the development industry, and in turn the construction sector, to get projects underway. This includes delivering a pipeline of housing projects through:

- ensuring a clear pathway through planning to support expedited housing delivery, including through Priority Development Areas (PDAs)
- bringing development-ready land to market
- unlocking state-owned land that is surplus or underutilised by addressing tenure and site constraints
- securing funding for, and construction of, site enabling infrastructure to support housing delivery by the private sector.

EDQ has considered the Reports' findings relating to Land Use Regulation and notes the specific comments regarding EDQ's role. EDQ has implemented a range of initiatives which directly respond to the report's recommendations to increase the supply of development ready land, reduce regulatory complexity, streamline processes for development approval and increase the accountability and transparency of the performance of development approval processes. EDQ is committed to responding to some of the challenges highlighted in the Commission's Interim Report and to play a role in improving development efficiency which in turn helps to address housing affordability. Further information regarding EDQ's current priorities is provided in our submission below.

Reducing Regulatory Complexity

The Report notes that stakeholders have suggested that EDQ should remove unnecessary or duplicative requirements from plans in Priority Development Areas (PDAs), including those relating to affordable housing and energy efficiency as these may not achieve their stated outcomes and increase costs and uncertainty (page 25). The Report also notes that there is evidence to suggest that additional regulatory requirements in local and state planning schemes, including PDAs, are problematic (page 139).

When preparing new PDA development schemes, EDQ conducts a housing needs analysis to examine the housing requirements for the area to identify how these can be met within the PDA. Flexibility is a major benefit of PDAs with innovation encouraged in delivering a range of housing typologies that meet community need.

EDQ has recently released for consultation amended Development Schemes for the Northshore Hamilton and Woolloongabba PDAs. The development schemes are being amended to better support the delivery of much-needed housing supply by providing a clear, streamlined regulatory framework for development.

At Northshore, the amended Development Scheme will support a land release strategy to and fast-track the release land to the market and unlock up to 10,000 new homes. The amended Development Scheme for the Woolloongabba PDA responds to market conditions and industry feedback to stimulate new housing applications.

Key changes in the new Development Schemes include:

- removing requirements that add unreasonable costs to delivering housing,
- removing red tape and duplication,
- increasing flexibility, and
- simplifying and rationalising the document.

Following public notification EDQ will consider submissions made during the consultation period and whether further changes are required to the development schemes before adoption.

EDQ's approach will support the declaration of new PDAs in key locations across Queensland and provide more consistent engagement with state agencies, local government, and industry to deliver better outcomes. A more 'hands-on' approach to state government coordination for infrastructure delivery to service PDAs is being undertaken as part of the PDA planning process.

Development approval processes

The Report noted that there can be excessive delays in development approval processes, including in Priority Development Areas, where approvals are supposed to be streamlined (page 149).

EDQ is implementing a range of initiatives to transform its regulatory services to support development opportunities and fast-track housing outcomes. These include:

- streamlining pre-lodgement and development assessment processes
- introducing digital systems for development application tracking and standardised documentation

- strengthening collaboration with local government, state agencies, and stakeholders.

EDQ has also developed a suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor and report on how new development applications are assessed and approved. To improve transparency and respond to market priorities, EDQ will publish, on its website, monthly data on Development Assessment performance.

EDQ has noted the comments in the Report regarding delays in development approvals in PDAs. In some PDAs, development assessment has been delegated by the Minister for Economic Development Queensland (MEDQ) to the relevant Council. Where consideration of state interests for proposed development in a PDA is required, for example where a proposed development requires approval under State legislation other than the *Planning Act 2016*, a development proponent is required to gain any required approvals relevant State Government entities independently of the development assessment process.

Further consideration is required by EDQ as to whether the model of delegating development assessment powers within a PDA back to Council fails to achieve the aim of a PDA to fast-track assessment and this may be worth further consideration by the Commission.

In enabling development in PDAs, EDQ may assist in facilitating state interest reviews by 'brokering' solutions between parties. However, where agreement cannot be reached, delays may become problematic. EDQ is committed to being more engaged and responsive to industry's needs and challenges and to be a more wholistic partner in dealing with Government.

Increasing the supply of development ready land

The Report submits that the State Government should use its powers to increase the supply of development rights, particularly where increases in density are likely to provide significant benefit (page 164).

A key function of EDQ is to bring land to market for development, with a focus on housing and industrial and commercial development. To achieve this, EDQ is releasing a pipeline of development-ready land for market uptake. Between June and September 2025, EDQ released 8.9 hectares of development-ready land across the Gold Coast, Logan and Ipswich. Over the next 12 months, EDQ is proposing to release more than 40 hectares of additional land across Queensland, including at Townsville, Southport and Yeerongpilly.

EDQ is also activating underutilised state-owned land for release to the market and adopting new approaches to support the delivery of large-scale housing supply. EDQ will utilise its existing skills and expertise and unique legislative and planning powers to deliver an approach that works collaboratively across Government agencies and with the private sector to release land to market.

External funding also plays a crucial role in supporting Queensland projects. Housing funding programs such as Housing Australia's Future Fund (HAFF) provide subsidies, concessional finance, and collaboration with Community Housing Providers to deliver more social and affordable rental housing. Additionally, HAFF will support the supply of market Build-to-Rent housing, provided it includes affordable stock.

EDQ has also been successful in seeking funding for enabling infrastructure through the Australian Government's \$1.5 billion Housing Support Program Priority Workstream. This initiative will support critical services and road infrastructure to unlock land at Meadowbrook, Bundamba, Southern Thornlands, Cairns and Oonoonba (Townsville)

Infrastructure provision

While the report notes that assessing infrastructure planning and sequencing is beyond the scope of the Inquiry (page 26), the delivery of critical infrastructure, including water, sewerage, power and road infrastructure, is a key enabler to unlocking new land for housing. A major challenge for industry in advancing development projects is the timely provision of infrastructure, particularly within greenfield sites. The initial funding of the significant infrastructure needed that also serves multiple developments is often too expensive for one developer to cover entirely, especially at the start of their project.

This is further exacerbated by fragmented land ownership in larger greenfield areas as this limits large-scale development opportunities, thereby hampering efficient infrastructure delivery, and resulting in increased land and holding costs due to development delays.

There is also an on-going challenge in determining the appropriate allocation of costs for infrastructure between developers (through infrastructure charges imposed on new developments) and the broader community who benefits from that infrastructure investment (through rates and taxes).

EDQ supports the delivery of essential infrastructure through administering various catalyst infrastructure programs. Catalyst Infrastructure Funding programs support the delivery of key infrastructure to unlock new land for housing, by providing low interest or interest free loans to councils, utility providers and developers to bring forward lots for development and co-contributing to funding the projects. Loans are repaid by developers over 10-15 years. For example, in the last five years, EDQ has administered infrastructure funding programs which will contribute to bringing forward 75,000 lots for development.

EDQ notes the Commission's commentary regarding the importance of involving relevant stakeholders in planning for development, including the provision of major trunk infrastructure, to ensure achievement of the desired outcome of bringing forward land for development.

Infrastructure funding programs, such as the Queensland Government's \$2 billion Residential Activation Fund and the Australian Government's Housing Support Program, are facilitating land development for housing in both metropolitan and regional areas by enabling crucial infrastructure and community amenity projects essential for housing construction.

In the recent 2025-26 State Budget, the Queensland Government allocated \$150 million over 3 years to accelerate delivery of trunk infrastructure in the Waraba PDA aiming to support the creation of 11,500 homes. For the Waraba PDA, EDQ is the regulatory authority responsible for assessing development applications. EDQ has been actively preparing the Waraba PDA Development Scheme in consultation with the City of Moreton Bay Council, Unitywater, relevant Queensland Government agencies and industry. EDQ has also formed the Waraba PDA Industry Reference Group, which connects the development industry directly to the EDQ project team and has been attended by over 30 industry representatives to date. Guidelines for the Waraba PDA Catalyst Infrastructure Funds are being prepared and submissions for funding will be called for as a priority.

Closing Comments

EDQ thanks the Queensland Productivity Commission for the opportunity to provide a submission. The issues facing the construction sector are complex and require cooperation across all levels of government, the private sector, and community sector to provide solutions.

EDQ recognises that it has a role to play in developing and implementing solutions to assist industry to get development underway, particularly in relation to its regulatory role and delivering a pipeline of land supply in targeted areas of Queensland. In response, EDQ is implementing a range of reforms and programs to do this more efficiently and effectively. This includes cutting red tape and improving regulatory services and responsiveness, while also identifying and de-risking government owned land to put to the market for industry to develop.

EDQ looks forward to the outcomes of the inquiry and welcomes the opportunity for further engagement. In the meantime, EDQ will continue to work collaboratively across all sectors to remove barriers, forge impactful partnerships, and play a 'light touch' curatorial role to foster solutions the market can support.