

KURILPA FUTURES - QUESTIONS FOR FORTHCOMING STATE ELECTION

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The Greens

Specific Questions

Urban Planning

Question 1

“Performance based planning”, with its inherent flexibility of interpretation, has been the basis of Planning legislation in Queensland for nearly a decade, but in recent times, performance assessment has been used to evade carefully constructed planning controls on height, density and siting requirements. If elected what would be your approach to performance based planning?

The current planning legislation in Queensland puts the interests of property developer profit before the needs of residents. Performance based planning has allowed property developers to generate huge profits and override neighbourhood plans, by arguing for performance based outcomes, without the need for community engagement. In our Planning for People policy, we propose to fix this overuse of performance based planning.

We propose the introduction of deliberative democracy for neighbourhood plans. Instead of being written and then rubber-stamped by local governments, neighbourhood plans would be crafted by planning experts, elected councillors and “citizen juries” from the local area and the region. Members of the citizen juries would be paid for their time, and would be given the necessary information, time, space and resources to deliberate. In the trial, neighbourhood plans would need to be approved by a community referendum held to coincide with local or State government elections.

We propose tightening neighbourhood plans with:

- Strict and binding height limits: Individual developers should not be allowed ‘performance-based’ exemptions to height limits, as the potential for corruption is too high. If there is a public benefit in permitting higher, denser buildings in a particular area, councils should go through the process of consulting with the wider community and amending the neighbourhood plan accordingly, rather than approving individual developments that exceed the height limit on an ad hoc basis.
- No exemptions to boundary setbacks: Too often, developers are allowed to build closer to the property boundary than the city plan specifies. When developers build too close to the boundary, it robs residents of natural sunlight, hurts property values, makes it harder to redevelop neighbouring properties, and can also make it more difficult to maintain nearby buildings. The Greens would seek to abolish exemptions to side or rear boundary setbacks.

We also propose broader changes to the planning scheme, including:

- Ensuring all major developments are “impact assessable”. Any development project - whether commercial or residential - should be treated as “impact assessable” if it is eight or more storeys in height, or if it is five or more storeys taller than existing neighbouring properties. The Greens would fundamentally overhaul the State Development Act and the Economic Development Act to limit priority development areas to State-owned and State-run projects rather than for-profit projects.

- Strengthening community objection rights: The Greens would extend full “merits review” to any “material change of use” under special development zones like State Development Areas. We would also increase access to information for local residents by mandating the publication of rigorous economic modelling and assessment for major projects.
- Closing loopholes in the planning act: We would remove the discretion which allows State or local governments to: 1) provide exemption certificates from assessment; 2) allow a developer to choose who decides their application through ‘alternative’ assessment managers; and 3) allow a ‘minor change of use’ that is not a material change of use and therefore does not need development approval.
- We would also remove discretions which allow property developers to: 1) ‘opt out’ of providing information requested by an assessment manager or referral agency; and 2) include broadly any ‘ancillary uses’ under a development approval. Instead, we would reinstate the more precise definition of ‘use’ as ‘incidental to and necessarily associated with the use of the premises’, as provided under the Sustainable Planning Act 2009. The Greens would grant veto power over development applications to environment and heritage assessors

Question 2

Consistent with the State Government role in Planning legislation, what are your thoughts on the State Government requiring a review of the South Brisbane Riverside Neighbourhood Plan to achieve greater compliance with the State Government standards for educational, child and youth services and open space?

We know that the South Brisbane area, include West End and Highgate Hill, are facing a critical lack of green space, and increasing pressure on schools. I would support a review of the South Brisbane Neighbourhood Plan, to incorporate requirements for education facilities, child and youth services and open space.

With regard to schools, the Greens have proposed identifying land within the Kurilpa Master Plan to be re-zoned for education. We have proposed the development of a Kurilpa Point College, with an integrated primary and high school, pending consultation with residents and parents. We have proposed the development of a Queensland Public Infrastructure Bank to fund this kind of crucial infrastructure. This would need to happen in conjunction with proposed expansions for West End State School.

The Greens ‘Planning for People’ initiative proposes introducing deliberative democracy for neighbourhood plans (see details below for question 5).

Question 3

Scope the development outcomes that you would wish to see for the land known as the Kurilpa Master Plan and the timeframes for this development?

The Kurilpa Master Plan incorporates a 25 hectare parcel of land, and a unique opportunity to re-define West End and the Kurilpa Peninsula. However, under the current planning system, it is unlikely that the community will see the kinds of positive outcomes that might be possible with a more inclusive and grounded approach.

Some key outcomes that I would wish to see would include:

- Significant community consultation, in line with our suggested reforms of for the planning scheme

- The inclusion of publicly owned green space, and
- Zoning of education land for the development of a Kurilpa College.
- The inclusion of affordable housing
- Measures to clean up the Brisbane River
- Significant investment in public infrastructure in the Plan, including public transport

Question 4

The approval of the West Village project overdevelops the site as it fails to deliver 20% green space and fails to meet the building height limit of 15 stories. Do you support the changing Stage 2 and Stage 3 of this site to incorporate some affordable housing and increased public green space rather than aggregating laneways and outdoor dining areas as green space? Will you strongly advocate for these modifications if elected?

Yes. The Greens have been vocal on the issues associated with the West Village project, including the height exemption, and the lack of genuine green space. I would respectfully suggest that the Deputy Premier made a serious mistake in her decision to allow the developers to exceed the height limit and green space requirements, and not make any requirements for affordable housing. As it stands the West Village development stands to do enormous damage to our community and I would strongly support any community campaign opposed to the current project.

Under our proposed planning reforms, height limits and greenspace provisions would be non-negotiable - so developers would have to seek an amendment to the neighbourhood plan if they wished to build above height limits or avoid green space provisions. These proposed reforms were in part inspired by the experience local communities have had in South Brisbane - include West Village.

I would support amending stages 2 and 3 of the development to incorporate affordable housing. The Greens have proposed the introduction of a rule whereby 20% of all new multi-dwelling developments must be delivered as social housing stock. The inclusionary zoning would be phased in over 10 years, beginning at 10% and increasing by 5% increments every 5 years. As such, we'd be advocating for West Village to have at least 10% affordable housing.

I would support the expansion of public green space delivered as part of the West Village project. Currently, 30% of the site is included as 24 hour publicly accessible open space, laneways and arcades. This is not the same as public green space. The State Government's current \$20 000 and \$28 000 caps on residential infrastructure charges are far too low for the council to raise the money needed to acquire land in the inner-city. This is part of the reason why there is now such a significant shortage of public green space and community facilities in suburbs like West End and Woolloongabba.

Community Engagement

Question 5

Kurilpa Futures believe that current Planning Scheme requirements are being evaded by simple amendments such as to overlay provisions, zoning proposal interpretations and "acceptable" variations to conditions. These appear to be made without coherent evidence or statistical analyses to justify changes. How can residents have access to the evidence based data and ensure it is used for future changes to planning requirements?

The Greens have proposed introducing deliberative democracy for neighbourhood plans. Instead of being written and then rubber-stamped by local governments, neighbourhood plans would be crafted by planning experts, elected councillors and “citizen juries” from the local area and the region. Members of the citizen juries would be paid for their time, and would be given the necessary information, time, space and resources to deliberate. In the trial, neighbourhood plans would need to be approved by a community referendum held to coincide with local or State government elections.

We would also increase access to information for local residents by mandating the publication of rigorous economic modelling and assessment for major projects.

As a safeguard, the Greens would also maintain support for the Environment Defenders Office and other free legal assistance services which help communities take on big developers.

Political Donations

Question 6

Would you vote to prevent donations to candidates or their political party by an owner of registered development company or a company that has a vested interest in land development or their representatives?

Yes, we would. Unfortunately it’s not just direct donations that corrupt our democracy. Politicians form close relationships with property developers through schools, private functions, sitting on boards and various other social engagements. These close relationships fundamentally undermine our democratic processes. The Greens would seek to not only ban all corporate donations to political parties, we would go further and:

- Ban cash-for-access meetings, where lobbyists or corporations pay in corporate donations for access to government ministers.
- Give our anti-corruption watchdog (the CCC) teeth, by expanding the CCC’s definition of corruption to include a wider range of conduct. We will also make the CCC hold public hearings so the public knows what’s going on in our state
- Jam the revolving door between politics and lobbyists. We’ll double the waiting period for politicians to become lobbyists to four years, so they have to wait at least full-term of parliament before they can lobby for big dodgy corporations. And we’ll close the dodgy loophole to make sure “industry associations” are captured by the law.

Developer Contributions

Question 7

Currently developer contributions to the provision of infrastructure are paid into Brisbane City Council’s general revenue and not spent directly or in a timely manner in the suburbs that are experiencing the pressure of development. Will you actively lobby to amend State Planning legislation to change this situation and for public release of an annual income and expenditure budget relating to developer infrastructure contributions?

The Kurilpa Peninsula are facing huge increase in population. This is putting large stress on existing public infrastructure that is not being adequately improved or upgraded to cope.

We would seek to introduce a 75% Developer Tax on increases in land value due to rezoning. Estimates show that Queensland would earn \$1.8 billion per year. That's an extra \$9 billion over five years that we can use to pay for more affordable housing, schools, green space and hospitals.

We would remove the cap on developer infrastructure charges. The Queensland government imposes an arbitrary \$20,000 cap on 'infrastructure charges' for new developments which local governments use to fund vital facilities like parks and public transport. The Greens would remove these caps on infrastructure charges so that local councils have the flexibility to charge developers according to the cost of delivering crucial infrastructure.

We would support measures to make income and expenditure of infrastructure charges transparent for the community, to ensure that revenue is invested in essential public infrastructure where development is occurring.

Affordable Housing

Question 8

What are your thoughts on Inclusionary zoning for affordable housing? Would you support establishing a State Government standard of service for a proportion of affordable housing within new development in inner city areas?

Over the past 10 years there has been a massive development boom in South East Queensland but very little increase in the supply of affordable housing. There are 20,000 Queenslanders who are homeless, and 29,000 people on the waiting list for social housing. As the boom begins to wind down, we can't miss an opportunity to expand our affordable housing stock. The Queensland Greens would establish a rule whereby 20% of all new multi-dwelling developments must be delivered as social housing stock. The inclusionary zoning will be phased in over 10 years, beginning at 10% and increasing by 5% increments every 5 years. This needs to happen in conjunction with significant government investment in affordable housing throughout Queensland.

Open Space

Question 9

Currently, open space contributions can be land or a monetary contribution with developers generally defaulting to a monetary contribution. This means the ratio of open space to number of residents is decreasing throughout Brisbane's inner city and especially in the Kurilpa peninsula. Would you support a State Planning policy that requires a land contribution for example 20% of site area wherever the proposal is for 0.5 hectares or more?

We would support policies to require developments to include a land contribution, as opposed to a monetary contribution. The Greens would make sure that publicly-accessible green space and other community facilities are provided on site for major developments rather than money being 'allocated' for provision elsewhere which may never eventuate. Developers would also be required to allocate funding for maintenance of on-site green space in advance.

Minimum requirements for deep-planted trees and green space need to be binding rather than negotiable. If a neighbourhood plan specifies that 10% of a site has to include deep-planted trees, this should be understood as the non-negotiable minimum.

Transport

Question 11

On at least four occasions, there has been a proposal for a bridge to link West End to northern suburbs. Each time it has been rejected by previous Councils and residents of the Kurilpa peninsula. Once again a new bridge to the University of Queensland is being discussed. Kurilpa Futures is opposed to this proposal. How would you manage the transport and mobility needs of the Kurilpa Peninsula?

The current way our transportation networks are designed is failing the residents of residents in Kurilpa Peninsula and South Brisbane in general. A car-centric design does not make sense in neighbourhoods such as the Kurilpa Peninsula that are facing increasing population density and visitor traffic. First, and foremost, any new proposal needs to have genuine, in-depth and extensive community consultation.

This election the Greens are proposing a cycle and pedestrian bridge from West End to Toowong. We believe this will assist in reducing car traffic along Montague Rd and throughout West End by encouraging residents from the nearest Western suburbs to walk and cycle in rather than drive. It would also allow West End residents to access Coronation Drive, the Toowong Train station and allow students to access the University. However, in line with our commitment to community democracy, if after consultation with the community people oppose the project we would of course withdraw our support. We are proposing the development of a Victoria Street Ferry Terminal.

South Brisbane is facing serious issues with parking and traffic congestion. If we want to relieve pressure on our suburbs we need to invest significantly more in public transport making it cheaper and more accessible.

We are proposing abolishing zones in Brisbane and introducing flat \$1 fares for all adults and free for under 18s. The current zone system creates unnecessary disincentives for people from outer suburbs to use public transport - this leads to more people driving into South Brisbane to save money. Our plan would save the average commuter 70%. Our plan would cost \$216 million, which is entirely affordable if we properly taxed property developers and mining companies. In comparison we currently spending \$650 million on the Kingsford Smith Drive road widening.

We would also review and redesign the bus networks to ensure that there are high-frequency bus routes along every major road. Almost all bus routes in West End are routed via the Cultural Centre, meaning if residents need to get to East Brisbane they have to add an extra half hour to their travel time to account for a bus change. An example of a re-designed, a high frequency bus route would be introduced along Vulture Street/Stanley Street, to allow West End residents easier access to East Brisbane.

Improve cycling infrastructure in the peninsula to encourage more people to use active transport. This would include safe separated bike lanes on on major routes, for example Vulture Street in West End to Woolloongabba. The Greens would more than double existing State government cycling funding, with \$150 million over 5 years
Ensure that Victoria Bridge provides adequate space for cyclists and cargo-bikes.