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The management and protection of First Nations cultural heritage in Queensland should be in the hands of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people, especially Traditional Owners with responsibility for the area in question, and not in the hands of the State or developers. The following reforms are the minimum needed to improve the protection of cultural heritage in Queensland:

- Amend the definition of 'Aboriginal party' so that traditional owners with cultural connection to Country can be involved in consultation and negotiation processes, regardless of their status as a Native Title party.
- Create greater enforcement powers for First Nations, so that they aren't reliant on the State to protect cultural heritage if it is in imminent danger of harm or destruction.
- Establish an independent First Nations-led decision-making body that is responsible for dispute resolution and mediation, and for assessing the right people to speak for 'Country', not just those who have been "recognised" as responsible in the imposed legal system.

I thank you for the opportunity to make this submission and trust that all relevant views will be considered in the process,

Michael Mullerworth
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