



Speech by

Mr D. BRISKEY

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

Hansard 9 June 1999

WHEPSTEAD MANOR

Mr BRISKEY (Cleveland—ALP) (11.04 p.m.): I rise to speak about an issue that is of great concern to many within my electorate. Whepstead Manor is a grand old heritage listed property at Wellington Point that was built in 1889 and today stands as an important link with our past. In 1992 the Goss Government passed the first heritage legislation ever enacted in Queensland so that properties like Whepstead could be protected. Without this legislation, many more important Queensland landmarks would have been destroyed, like those that we saw destroyed in the middle of the night under previous Governments. Who will ever forget the Bellevue?

Not only is it important to protect buildings but it is also important to protect the gardens and surrounds that add to the grandeur of historical properties and tell us much about the lifestyle of our forebears. Herein lies the problem that those of us who want to see Whepstead Manor protected are faced with. The building is grand and is a listed property. However, the adjacent, now vacant land should also be protected. This land was once part of the property that Whepstead Manor sat on. It was very much a part of Whepstead when Whepstead was built and stood grandly on this large site. The site helped define the property.

The Queensland Heritage Act 1992 states that for a place to be entered in the Heritage Register, it must be of cultural heritage significance and satisfy one or more criteria listed under Part 4 of the Act. Whepstead Manor and its surrounds satisfy most of those criteria. It most certainly is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Queensland's history. Whepstead Manor is a building, but the area of land on which it used to sit is very much a part of Queensland's history and provides insights into that history. Simply conserving the building without the total land on which it sits tells only part of the story of our past.

Another criterion is that the place has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Queensland's history. Whepstead Manor certainly does this. Once again it is not just the building that contributes to an understanding of Queensland's history, but it is also the grounds, the size of those grounds and where they are that tells a story as well.

Criterion (e) states that the place is important because of its aesthetic significance. Anyone who is fortunate enough to visit Whepstead Manor will comment on its beauty. The large grounds that surround Whepstead add to its beauty. Just as an artist does not paint a painting with only the main subject but places the subject in a context, so too Whepstead needs its large grounds around it to place it in its context. If an artist left out the background or other details, that would detract from the beauty of the painting.

Whepstead needs the large grounds in which it originally stood to remain so that its beauty or, as the Queensland Heritage Act states, its aesthetic significance can be conserved. For a place to be registered, it must meet only one criterion. Whepstead Manor meets many. It is an extremely significant property and it should be protected as it was, that is, on its original, large property.

When observed from a distance, Whepstead's beauty and significance are obvious. If a large unit development is allowed adjacent to or on the land which was once part of the

Whepstead site, it will surely affect the heritage significance of Whepstead. I do not believe that a unit development is acceptable, as it will surely detract from the aesthetic significance of the site. If this development does, as I believe, detract from the aesthetic significance of the site, then it is in contravention of the objects of the Queensland Heritage Act, because the objects provide that the Minister, the council and other bodies and persons concerned in its administration must seek to achieve the retention of the cultural heritage significance of the places and objects to which it applies.

Time expired.
