



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

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QUEENSLAND HERITAGE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Ms MALE (Glass House—ALP) (11.11 p.m.): I rise to support the Queensland Heritage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2003. When the Queensland Heritage Act 1992 came into operation just over 10 years ago, along with the Freedom of Information Act 1992 and the Judicial Review Act 1991, it was part of a significant suite of legislative change that transformed Queensland.

Prior to the interim Heritage Buildings Protection Act 1990 there was no heritage legislation, and Queensland was infamous as a place of midnight demolitions. The Queensland Heritage Act 1992 was the product of the heritage green paper and extensive consultation with all the stakeholder groups. The 1992 act had the advantage of being able to draw on the strengths of legislation in other jurisdictions to construct a piece of heritage legislation that was at the forefront of heritage legislation in Australia. These amendments to the 1992 Heritage Act will improve the operation of the legislation.

The Heritage Act gives recognition and protection to places throughout Queensland which tell the story of this state. Cultural heritage places help us to understand how people dealt with the challenges and opportunities of the Queensland environment, and how the Queensland environment impacted on them and on their lives. Queensland's special cultural heritage places are many and varied, ranging from modest cottages, such as Langenbaker House at Ilfracombe, to grand mansions such as Fernberg Government House, or even to grand houses such as mine which is over 100 years old and is still being renovated as we speak, to bridges and railway stations, historic mines such as Mount Morgan, landmark landscapes such as Castle Hill in Townsville, commercial buildings, war memorials and country halls.

Over the past 10 years the Heritage Act has been very successful in raising public consciousness about heritage. This is evidenced by the growth in the number and the diversity of the places on the Heritage Register. The Heritage Register now encompasses over 1,370 places. Not only has the number of places increased; the diversity of places recognised for their heritage values has increased. The Heritage Register now includes the Ipswich Railway Workshops, a small fishing shack at South Stradbroke, and the recently added Lakeside Raceway.

The increase in public awareness and interest in heritage has also paralleled the interest in the adaptive re-use of heritage buildings. The woolstores at Teneriffe are now fashionable apartments and the Judith Wright Centre—a former tea warehouse which is now an arts centre—are two examples of successful re-use of heritage buildings.

The Heritage Act has created a climate in which heritage is not only recognised and managed but also valued as an important part of the tourism industry of the state. The government has assisted in the development of cultural tourism through the establishment of the Heritage Trails Network, which encourages visitors to explore Queensland's unique heritage and natural wonders.

The Queensland Heritage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2003 will enhance the operation of the Heritage Act for the convenience of the owners of heritage places and businesses based on heritage tourism. The government recognises that the owners of cultural heritage places and the owners and promoters of heritage businesses play a critical role in maintaining the unique nature of Queensland. This is smart heritage legislation for the Smart State, and I commend the bill to the House.