



Speech by

Mrs Julie Attwood

MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

Hansard Wednesday, 5 October 2005

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mrs ATTWOOD (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (12.40 pm): I rise to support the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2005. Amendments to the Queensland Heritage Act 1992 will streamline the management of heritage places for owners by allowing trustees and lessees to apply for exemption certificates from the Heritage Council and to enter into heritage agreements with the Heritage Council.

The Sinnamon Farm precinct in my electorate has been an issue of concern to people in my electorate for many years. I will talk about the significance of this farm in the history of the western suburbs of Brisbane. Sinnamon Farm is a place of cultural heritage significance and satisfies one or more of the criteria in section 23(1) of the act, as evidenced by, but not exclusive to, the statement of heritage significance based on criteria a, b, d and h.

This precinct is located along Seventeen Mile Rocks Road opposite Sinnamon Village. Sinnamon Farm is significant historically because it illustrates the early phase of rural settlement and land use which took place along reaches of the Brisbane River and other Queensland waterways from the 1860s to the 1890s, especially the clearing of rainforests for scrub, the ensuing pattern of farming and the growth of community life centred on the family, school and church. In particular the farm survives as an illustration of the evolution, association and location within a single family of a small grouping of farm dwellings, outbuildings and associated community buildings.

The buildings, structures, sites, objects and plantings of Sinnamon Farm form a rare rural grouping within a late 20th century suburban district in Brisbane and are important in illustrating a past way of life. As a farming landscape with a developmental sequence of 19th century buildings and structures, Sinnamon Farm forms a rare and distinctive grouping in Brisbane.

The principal buildings and structures of Sinnamon Farm include a gable-roofed house of the late 1860s, two 1880s to 1890s residences, slab outbuildings and an 1870s gable-roofed schoolhouse. These are typical timber buildings of what was once rural Queensland and, in their intactness, are important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of their type.

Sinnamon Farm is important for its strong association with the Sinnamon family, which has been prominent in local affairs, the development of the district and many other fields of public endeavour since the 1860s. All together the Sinnamon Farm produced a wide range of primary products, commencing with sugarcane and cotton then maize, potatoes, pineapples and dairy produce. In later years it concentrated on breeding horses and cattle, especially pure jersey stock.

The Sinnamon family also took a leading part in local affairs, in particular with the establishment of the Seventeen Mile Rocks school and the local church. Benjamin Sinnamon served on the Sherwood Shire Council. What was once a rural setting is now a booming metropolis in my electorate of Mount Ommaney.

As children in the Seventeen Mile Rocks area had to journey to Corinda to school, a provisional school was built in Goggs Road as early as 1870. This building of split timber and furnishing was supplied by local farmers in accordance with the education act of the same year. By 1876 local residents had collected sufficient funds to erect a new school facing Goggs Road on the south-east corner of portion 316, about 100 metres south of the original site. This building was completed in 1877 by Wilson Henry, local resident and cousin to the Sinnamon family, and opened at the beginning of the 1878 school year with 32 pupils.

The schoolhouse was complemented by a detached shelter, a shed and a teacher's residence. In the early 1900s the interior of the schoolhouse was lined with narrow tongue-and-groove boards and its shingled roof was replaced with a corrugated galvanised iron roof. The school finally closed in 1966 when Jindalee State School opened.

From the 1960s some Sinnamon land was sold for inclusion in the new suburb of Jindalee, but all the family property between Seventeen Mile Rocks Road and the Brisbane River was retained, principally through the efforts of HV Sinnamon. In order to preserve the family's history and heritage in the Seventeen Mile Rocks area, Sinnamon opposed the proposal for a cross-river bridge through the remaining farm land, shifted the threatened former state school onto his property and published a history of the Sinnamon family. In the mid-1960s he also donated land to the relocation of the threatened Seventeen Mile Rocks church, which to this day still has services coordinated by the local Anglican parish community.

Local resident Claire Wilson has been taking up a petition to save the heritage precinct from falling into neglect and disrepair. EPA advises that no development application by the owner has been received for the site for any improvements. The minister advised recently that she has received recommendations from the ministerial advisory committee on a preferred model for cultural heritage management and released for public comment earlier in 2005 a discussion paper outlining the options for reform. She expects to put recommendations for legislative reform to the government next year.

In relation to grant funding, the minister has asked that the Queensland Heritage Council provide her with advice on more innovative funding options. She is looking into the Australian government's Productivity Commission inquiry into the conservation of historic heritage places, which is due to report in early 2006, and into other initiatives used in other jurisdictions in order to formulate a sustainable and effective assistance program for Queensland.

This new legislation provides that in the day-to-day management of a heritage property trustees and lessees are, for all practical purposes, responsible for the day-to-day maintenance and upkeep of a place, particularly where a local government or government agency is a trustee for a reserve, park or road. For example, in the case of a government agency as trustee the agency will now be able to make applications to the Heritage Council and, with the consent of the owner, the chief executive administering the Lands Act 1994 will not be required. These amendments will allow trustees and lessees to enter into heritage agreements with the minister. I commend the bill to the House.