



Speech by

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QUEENSLAND HERITAGE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Ms LEE LONG (Tablelands—ONP) (12.09 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to this debate on the Queensland Heritage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2007. This bill follows a review which concluded that the existing Queensland Heritage Act 1992 was out of step with best practice legislative standards and with community needs. Amendments in this bill address four broad areas. Firstly, they set out the roles and responsibilities of the Queensland Heritage Council and the chief executive of the Environmental Protection Agency so that the council focuses on strategic and high priority issues while some day-to-day regulatory processes are moved over to the EPA. Secondly, these amendments propose to improve accountability for the timeliness of processes for entering places on the Queensland Heritage Register. Thirdly, it will integrate regulation of archeological sites into the Integrated Planning Act 1997 and, finally, it will introduce processes for keeping local heritage registers to ensure all local governments have a workable system in place for identifying and protecting local heritage places.

I intend to use this opportunity to bring to the minister's attention the town of Irvinebank, which has a number of heritage listed buildings. They have been heritage listed for many years but have received little or no funding for the repairs and maintenance of these buildings. Irvinebank had its heyday around the turn of the 20th century—from around the 1880s to 1920. John Moffat, who was the architect and giant of mining in far-north Queensland around that time, centred his operation in and around Irvinebank. It was largely through him that the tablelands and areas to the west opened up in the first place. This was a time when mining actually boomed in and around Herberton, Irvinebank and Chillagoe. People on the Labor side might have heard of 'Red Ted' Theodore. He came from the Chillagoe area and was Premier of Queensland in the 1920s.

There is a lot of history involved in this area. It is history that really should be kept. A lot of it is still there. It has been held up because there was a dispute involving that area for about 20 years. It started in the days of the Bjelke-Petersen years in the early eighties and went through the nineties and was not resolved until around 2004. Around that time there was a dispute about some objects that were taken from the area. It is now three—going on four—years since that all happened. I think it is high time that that matter was resolved one way or another. The property settlement should be fixed up and what needs to come back should come back. If it does not come back, it does not come back, but let the people of Irvinebank get on with restoring those buildings. It has now become a tourist town. It is a lovely, quaint little town. When people travel over the Great Dividing Range they will see it sitting there on the other side. The tourists love it. John Moffat's house is still there. It has been turned into a very popular museum. There is a school of arts building, the old bank building, the state treatment works and a number of miner's cottages. All of these need to be fixed up and repaired so instead of only having a museum we can have all these other attractions as well. That would turn Irvinebank into a wonderful, historical tourist town. I wanted to raise that matter with the minister. This debate gave me the opportunity to do that.

The contrast between the intention of legislation such as this to protect and preserve our heritage as much as possible and the funding resources provided by this government is sharp. I believe that certain

heritage values do need to be recognised and appropriately protected. However, as often is the case, while it is easy to pass legislation, it is often a different matter when it comes to funding. I do call on the minister to see if he can resolve this particular matter with regard to Irvinebank and see if some funding can become available so that people up there can move on with their lives.