Speech by

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NEIGHBOURHOOD DISPUTES RESOLUTION BILL

Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (5.12 pm): This afternoon I rise to contribute to the Neighbourhood Disputes Resolution Bill 2010, originally presented to the parliament by the former Attorney-General on 25 November 2010. I acknowledge the new Attorney-General who has taken carriage of the bill. From the outset, I state to the House that the opposition will not be opposing this bill, but I will note some reservations that I will outline in greater detail. I foreshadow two amendments that I intend to move during the consideration in detail stage.

Essentially, the bill before the House deals with dividing fences and tree disputes between adjoining neighbours. I am sure that most members of the House will attest to the fact that dispute resolution is a conciliatory process. For the benefit of a broader society, the justice system provides the necessary framework and structure for the benefit of resolving disputes through a collaborative approach. Often, the most challenging disputes to resolve can be over things that would normally be seen to be petty and trivial. To assist in resolving those disputes, the bill being debated today essentially deals with dividing fences and trees on property boundaries. However, it goes further, not only dealing with disputes when they may arise but also first looking at a process whereby each neighbour is encouraged to sort the dispute out in a friendly manner.

The law on these matters needs to be rigid and transparent to allow for peaceful resolution to common neighbourhood disputes. I would hazard a guess that members of this House have seen all sorts of excerpts from various current affairs shows regarding the behaviour of the aptly dubbed 'neighbours from hell' and will know how disputes over small issues between neighbours can turn into larger, more physical encounters—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: It was not my house; I was not the neighbour—that can often involve others in a street or a neighbourhood and sometimes at your parents' properties. Sometimes, it is simply a case of a personality clash. We are a society of many personalities. As Queensland grows and the population becomes more dense, one would expect that neighbourhood disputes, particularly in relation to fences and trees, will arise. In a perfect world, we would shout from the rooftops, 'Can't we all just get along?' In my view, unfortunately that will never be the reality.

The bill before the House will repeal the Dividing Fences Act 1953. Many of our laws have been in existence for the best part of the last century and the Dividing Fences Act is certainly one that was in need of an overhaul. The bill before the House makes consequential and minor amendments to those mentioned in schedule 1 of the bill and amends the Land Act 1994 and the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009.

In our urbanised society, the trend is towards smaller residential blocks and an increased density in population. Accordingly, people are living in closer proximity and property boundaries need to be clearly defined. We are debating this legislation a few years after submissions closed for the review of the Dividing Fences Act, which occurred in July 2007. The bill before the House gives confirmation of a dividing fence

being equally owned by adjoining owners if it is located on common property. It is generally considered that adjoining neighbours financially contribute equally to the construction and maintenance of any dividing fence.

The bill provides greater clarity of what can be considered the broad definition of a dividing fence. Often when one considers a dividing fence, one may think of a five or six foot timber paling fence. However, quite often that is not the case. For the purposes of this new bill, a dividing fence is described in clauses 11 and 12. A fence is not considered to be a retaining wall or a wall that is part of a house, garage or other building. More emphasis is placed on a sufficient dividing fence and is determined in the bill before the House, which sets out specific measurements and requirements to satisfy what is a sufficient dividing fence. A sufficient dividing fence is considered to be between a minimum of 0.5 metres and a maximum of 1.8 metres in height and made of prescribed materials such as wood, including timber palings and lattice panels, chain wire, metal panels or rods, bricks, rendered cement, concrete blocks, hedge or other vegetative barrier, or any other material of which a dividing fence is ordinarily constructed.

If an informal arrangement cannot be agreed to for the purposes of fencing work, a notice to contribute must be provided and both owners need to consent to the undertaking of any fencing work. There is room in the bill for a broad interpretation of this section, which includes if two adjoining neighbours consider a dividing fence to be a sufficient dividing fence. For alterations to be undertaken to a dividing fence, authorisation needs to be provided by adjoining owners or QCAT for the purposes of a dispute over this issue. In regards to the ownership of a dividing fence, the bill does not affect the common law under which a dividing fence separating adjoining land is, to the extent the dividing fence is on the common property, owned equally by adjoining owners.

The bill sets out the contributory responsibilities of adjoining owners for the construction or maintenance of a dividing fence. As was the case originally, adjoining owners are equally liable for the construction or maintenance of a sufficient dividing fence. If one owner wishes to alter or construct a dividing fence that is greater than the standard, that owner is responsible for the fencing work to the extent that is greater than the standard of a sufficient dividing fence. I would appreciate the Attorney-General's clarification of how that will be practically determined by the adjoining owners, given that the general intent of the bill is for neighbourhood disputes to be resolved informally without the intervention of QCAT. I note in the notice provision, which one owner gives to the adjoining owner, the amount does not necessarily have to be equal. It can be non-equal but then an explanation is required. That was on the form that I received in the briefing from the Attorney's office.

Mr Lucas: Can I just say, as both a solicitor in practice and a member of parliament, that amongst the most difficult issues I have ever had to resolve are neighbourhood disputes. There is no doubt about that.

Mr Hoolihan: Hear, hear!

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the commentary by way of interjection from the Attorney-General and the member for Keppel. I will give some statistics later. I agree with the interjection of the Attorney-General that neighbourhood disputes are one of the largest areas of complaints because you are dealing with people and their personalities, which is half the problem. Ultimately, this bill will provide some certainty by way of more description.

I recall when I bought a block of land in Little Mountain, under the current Dividing Fences Act there was no real indication of a notice period. You sought to draft a letter, send it to the person and say, 'This is the quote I have,' and hope they agreed with it. That case involved two vacant blocks of land. The provisions under this bill which contain statutory forms—the legal forms that are required—will assist Queenslanders in terms of easing the burden relating to the drafting of particular letters. It will be an easier process to follow.

I note that the LGAQ also raised some concerns relating to the implementation of this legislation to road reserves as local government is the trustee of those particular types of land. Clause 14 has specific reference to the meaning of an owner of land which does not include a reference to reserves or road reserves. Local government is not the owner of this land and should not be required to financially contribute to a fence between a road reserve and adjoining freehold property.

While we are talking about local government, I would like to refer to an article published in the *Courier-Mail* on 19 September 2010 entitled 'Backyard battles go beyond the pale', which refers to an increase in reported neighbourhood disputes. In the article Ipswich Councillor Paul Tully states—

In my 31 years in council this has been the biggest issue.

Some of these persistent perpetrators are very adept at pushing boundaries and know evidence is very difficult to gather. Councils find it very difficult to catch them in the act.

The latest figures show that last financial year Brisbane City Council alone received 16,272 calls and complaints about noise, including 8,445 about domestic animals. Dispute resolution centres across the state also mediated 135 neighbour matters last financial year, 140 in 2008-09 and 128 in 2007-08.

I know that those members opposite are obsessed with Can-do Campbell Newman but now cannot even bring themselves to mention his name in this place. The same article states—

Brisbane Lord Mayor Campbell Newman said the council found itself under fire from all sides when it came to neighbourhood disputes.

The Attorney-General talked in terms of lawyers. However, I think councils also are in one of the most difficult positions.

Elements of the bill proffer ambiguity over potential retrospectivity of the timing of the new bill, specifically in relation to negligence or a deliberate act or omission, given that it repeals a bill that was already in existence for the purposes of a dividing fence. I do have reservations with respect to clause 26. I would appreciate the Attorney-General's reasoning as to the retrospective nature of that provision. I am always generally cautious with respect to retrospective clauses. That is so with this particular clause, which states—

This section applies if, whether before or after the commencement of this section, a dividing fence is damaged or destroyed by a negligent or deliberate act or omission ...

...

(2) The owner must restore the dividing fence to a reasonable standard, having regard to its state before the damage or destruction.

I agree with the sentiment of the provision in terms of negligent acts or omissions where the owner would be required to restore it to the original condition. The problem with making it retrospective is that we could potentially open the floodgates to claims and notices being issued for fences that date well back in time. We should try to avoid that scenario and start a fresh approach with this bill.

Clause 27(2) also states that a neighbour must not attach something to a dividing fence that materially and unreasonably alters or damages it. I would appreciate the Attorney-General's broader interpretation of clause 27 with specific reference to attached clothes lines, which are often attached to dividing fences and can exceed the height of the fence. I understand that the fence is built on the common property, but I do have some objections to Queenslanders being dictated to with regard to what they can and cannot attach to their fence. I know there is an equal contribution to the fence which is on a common boundary, as required by the law. However, the fact is that the minute we start legislating as to what people can and cannot do, particularly on their side of the property—even attaching certain things to the dividing fence—I think we are getting carried away.

The section of the bill which deals with an application for an order in the absence of an adjoining owner needs greater clarification. Clause 37(5) states—

This section continues to apply ... even if, after the order was made, the owner or the adjoining owner stopped owning the relevant parcel of land consisting of the adjoining land.

In consultation with the legal community, the Queensland Law Society raised serious concerns about clause 37(5) and described it as—

... problematic as it places an unreasonable onus on a former owner to seek permission of the current landowner to enter the land and carry out the required work. The former owner is placed in a tenuous position if the current landowner unreasonably refuses consent to enter the property, requiring the former owner to apply to QCAT for further directions. Furthermore, as the tribunal encourages self-representation, a former owner may not have been aware of his or her rights to make an application to have the order varied so that the current landowner is responsible for the fencing work.

This clause should be amended to protect the rights of the former owner in these particular cases. If a notice to contribute is issued and authorisation is provided by the adjoining owners, if an owner vacates that property subsequent to the authorisation of the work being undertaken then notice has been given and that owner should be deemed liable for an equal share of the cost involved. I understand and appreciate the general informal undertones of the bill before the House, but in circumstances such as this clause matters could potentially arise as outlined by the Queensland Law Society, creating a messy situation for all parties involved.

Clause 38 may lead to an increase in unnecessary applications to QCAT. We should first look to guide the owners to try to resolve the matter with the neighbour, with QCAT being the last resort if all other informal resolution attempts have failed. This goes to the underlying intent and heart of the bill—the use of QCAT as a last-resort option and also the purpose of the establishment of QCAT in the first instance, being to streamline aspects in the justice system. Ultimately, I agree with the underlying intent of the bill for the informal resolution of disputes, and that should be encouraged. The last thing we need to be doing is burdening QCAT with unnecessary cases, given that its workload has already led to questions of its potential productivity.

In practice, with the new provisions relating to the dividing fence on an adjoining property, equally contributed to by both parties, basically one owner will give a notice in the approved form to the other landowner describing the type of work to be carried out, the estimated cost of the work to be carried out and of course one written quotation. I note that in the briefing I had with the Attorney's department—and I thank him for that—officers did provide me with copies of the draft notices. I would like the Attorney-

General in his reply to indicate whether the department has amended or worked on those documents since that time. If so, perhaps they could be tabled in the House as well. If within one month of giving that notice to the owner they have not agreed, either party may apply to QCAT within two months after the notice is given for an order under section 35. This bill really gives QCAT an extraordinary balance of power and jurisdiction over both dividing fences and the subject trees, which the bill deals with as well.

One of the most interesting aspects of the bill is those provisions that deal with overhanging trees and branches. The second main section of this bill deals with neighbourhood disputes over trees. As outlined in the explanatory notes, this chapter of the bill deals with trees affecting property and places paramount importance on the safety of any person in the interests of the general public safety. In some aspects, trees which overhang other properties may seem to be a minor issue. However, again, if a dispute occurs there needs to be a structure to resolve the issue in a formal and informal manner before the dispute has the potential to go beyond what it should. I understand that most of the government's community consultation related to this chapter of the legislation, and I can understand why. It is understandable given the nature of this type of dispute.

The legislation outlines a process of providing notice if a neighbour wants to lop branches of a tree which overhang their boundary with the tree keeper. It is important to bear in mind that this bill does not override the common law with respect to the right of abatement; it simply adds to it. It does not get rid of the common law; it simply alters it to the common law approach of abatement, which I will explain in a minute.

The sections of the bill that relate to trees if a dispute arises are essentially dealt with in two parts. The first part deals with when a branch overhangs a fence by 50 centimetres and is under 2.5 metres high from the ground. So one part deals with situations where you may have branches up to 2.5 metres high from the ground and overhang the fence by more than 50 centimetres. The second part deals with the more problematic issue of large trees, potentially large gum trees, that pose a safety risk to person and property. So in one part we deal with the more limited issues of overhanging branches up to 2.5 metres high from the ground and then the second part deals with a bigger problem.

Under part 4 of the bill, a notice can be issued to an adjoining owner for branches, as I said, which overhang the boundary by more than 0.5 metres and up to 2.5 metres high above the ground. If this notice is not responded to by the tree keeper, the neighbour has the ability to undertake the work themselves or contract a tree lopper to undertake the work and recover the costs from the tree keeper to a maximum of $300 per year. So if branches are under 2.5 metres high from the ground and overhang the fence by more than 50 centimetres, in practice if that were to occur, under the common law situation at the moment you can lop the branches but the common law of abatement generally requires that the owner of the branches is still the tree keeper. Dispute generally arises when people lop the branches and then haul them over the neighbour's fence because the neighbour owns the tree.

Mr Lucas: Which is complying with the common law and usually makes it worse because they think they are insulting them in doing it.

Mr BLEIJIE: That is exactly right. So in this situation you can chop the branches yourself and you can keep the branches, if you so desire. There is no requirement to hand the branches back. But it also includes fruit. So, in a situation where my beautiful banana trees are overhanging my neighbour's property, my neighbours are under no requirement to hand the bananas back, although I have great neighbours and I hope they would—and we would share the bananas. Essentially, it means that if the neighbour wants to chop the overhanging fruit they can and they are under no requirement to hand it back to the tree keeper.

You can also issue a legal notice to which the neighbour has 30 days to respond. So you can either chop the branches down yourself or, if you want the tree keeper to do it, you issue a notice—which would be a standard notice—to which they have 30 days to respond. If a tree keeper then does not respond when you have asked them to chop the branches off, you can get someone to do it. Bearing in mind that when the adjoining owner gives the tree keeper the notice they also have to give a quote to have those overhanging branches taken down. If the tree keeper does not respond in 30 days, you can go ahead and get someone to do it and pass on the cost up to a maximum of $300.

I do have issues with respect to the $300. I note that in the briefing I had with the Attorney-General's department I raised the issue of the $300 and whether it applied per tree or per property each year. When the Attorney sums up, some clarification on that would be good. I do have particular issues with respect to this $300. I foreshadow that I will be moving an amendment in consideration in detail that deals with this $300. I fundamentally believe that we are going to get ourselves into a situation where—if we allow the notice to be given to the tree keeper and the tree keeper does not do it but then the neighbour decides to do it—the neighbour may have a mate who is a tree lopper and I see potential issues for quotes and invoices being falsified for the sake of a quick $300. I would rather not say that, but there will be those in our communities who will use this provision.

There is a provision in the legislation that says that only one notice can be issued to the tree keeper per year. You cannot issue the same notice for another 12 months. That may answer the question in terms

of whether it is a maximum of $300 per tree or per property per year. If they can issue only one notice per property per year, then I think that may clarify that situation.

I foreshadow that I will be moving an amendment that deletes the $300 aspect, going to the heart of the bill that deals with the dispute resolution processes. With the $300 aspect, we are only dealing with trees that overhang more than 50 centimetres and that are under 2.5 metres high from the ground. If you have a six-foot high fence, you are only dealing with overhanging branches from the top of the fence to 2.5 metres from the ground. I cannot see that as raising the potentially big issues that our big gum trees would raise, which are dealt with by QCAT in separate parts of the bill. Whether the Attorney supports that is his call.

I think we are going to get into a situation that we do not want to be in. For instance, I will use the analogy at my place at the moment where I do have overhanging bananas. If my neighbour chose—and they would not because they are lovely people—to issue me a notice to cut down the banana tree branches that overhang their property and I do not do it because I want the fruit to become nice and yellow and then give the neighbour half the fruit, they can issue me a notice, and if it costs someone $200 to come and do it I am going to be slapped with a $200 fee. I see that people will use this as an opportunity to make money. It will be an unfortunate consequence—$300 might not seem much, but we do have those in our community who will rely on that notice provision.

If an overhanging tree has the ability to cause serious injury to a person, serious damage to property or land or substantial, ongoing or unreasonable interference with a person's use and enjoyment of a person's land, and if this point is debatable, QCAT is once again the body with the jurisdiction to hear and decide on the matter. Essentially, the onus of the maintenance of the trees is still the responsibility of the tree keeper. If there is a dispute over branches which affect another property, then formal notice can be given, as I have indicated, and cost recovered to a maximum of $300 per year if the notice is not responded to. But I do not believe the $300 fee should apply. I believe that, for those branches that will not cause as much nuisance as the bigger branches, neighbours should be able to work it out between themselves with a step stool. After all, we are only talking about chopping branches that are under 2.5 metres high from the ground.

There needs to be a formal process of notice for these cases, as I have heard of cases where a neighbour has provided verbal notice to remove overhanging branches with the threat to contract a tree lopper and pass on the costs to the tree keeper. In examples where neighbours do have a good relationship or the neighbour is away or if the property is owned by an investor who does not reside there, this process needs to be clarified and written notice is appropriate in this instance—which the bill will cover.

I would like to thank Mrs Mary Tanevski, who I met in Toowoomba recently at shadow community cabinet. Mary provided her personal feedback in relation to this bill and the practical implications in her instance. In her situation, a neighbour has a large gum tree which overhangs her property. I will read the email that she sent to me following the meeting we had on Sunday, 6 March. In this email she is giving her general feedback in relation to the bill. She says—

... as it stands 2.5 metres is approximately the height of a wooden fence line and inadequate a height. My reasoning is that a tree-keeper should be responsible for the tree no matter how high it is, and not just for the 2.5 metres above the ground as stated in the bill. My tree keeping neighbour's tree is 50 metres high overhanging my property, and he does not accept ANY responsibility to maintain his nuisance tree causing thousands in damage. I am financially victimised and the tree keeping neighbour is NOT held responsible or accountable for his lack of maintenance at only 2.5 metres height.

I have spoken to Mary because she did raise the issue. But that situation that Mary talks about, with a 50-metre high gum tree, is not covered under the first section of the bill. It is covered under the second section of the bill which deals with the application to QCAT. So Mary's situation will be able to be resolved through the process of QCAT. For the benefit of members of the House and the Attorney-General, I will table photographs of Mary's nuisance tree, the 50-metre gum tree. I will also table copies of the nuisance branches. The nuisance for her is caused particularly by branches falling from this gum tree on to her cars where her carport is. Also, where she says that the bill will not cover it, it will. I have explained to Mary that she will be covered under the second provisions of the bill which deal with the application to QCAT. I table a copy of those photographs.

Tabled paper: Bundle of photographs depicting a nuisance tree and fallen branches [4176].

For Mary's situation with this gum tree it will work essentially like this. If people have large gum trees, as Mary does in her neighbouring property, that overhang to a certain extent they do not go through the provision of issuing the notice to the tree owner because we are obviously dealing with the broader issue of public safety. If people feel that a large tree is creating a nuisance, is potentially or is creating damage to person or property or is posing a potential safety risk they do apply through QCAT. QCAT has all-ranging, broad powers to determine the outcome of that—that is, whether any branches have to be lopped and who will pay for the lopping of the branches or whether the tree has to be cut down completely.

I say to Mary, who emailed me with photographs of the tree, that that will be dealt with under the second provision of the bill. I believe that her issue will be satisfactorily dealt with by an application to QCAT because obviously the branches overhanging are more than 2½ metres above the ground. She

wanted the option to apply to QCAT to resolve the matter. At clause 59 of the bill Mary will get that option, which is good.

I would like to thank the Attorney's staff for the briefing and their advice on the bill. There was some confusion at the time about the practical working of clause 58(4), which provides that a tree keeper is liable for the reasonable expense incurred by the neighbour, but only to a maximum of $300. Clarification from the Attorney that that is per property and not per tree would be beneficial. We do not want people getting slugged $300 for every tree.

As was the case in the previous chapter on dividing fences, I have a concern with respect to the onus on the seller of property once a transaction is completed. The Queensland Law Society also expressed similar concerns that the proposed bill gives a person, including their employees and agents, a right of entry with seven days notice; however, it does not limit the liability of the landowners that the entry is at the person's risk and the entry is subject to that person taking reasonable precautions not to damage, destroy or in any way adversely affect the property.

This could be overcome potentially by amending clause 87 allowing the new owner to recover costs from the seller if the order is made before the person enters a contract of sale for the land and fails to give the buyer a copy of the order before the buyer enters into the contract of sale. The lawyers in the chamber will know that this will create an additional burden on lawyers, particularly with contractual sales of property and the advice that one has to give to a client. QCAT is now required to keep a register. Lawyers will be advising clients of this particular register and whether any notices are contained in this register.

The Community Titles Institute Queensland also had concerns about the impact of this bill on owners of lots within community title schemes and also body corporate managers. Specifically this relates to clause 10 of the bill and the application of fencing provisions in overriding bylaws and that this principle ought not apply to trees as per chapter 3. For the benefit of the House I table a copy of correspondence on this matter sent to the Leader of the Opposition on 21 February 2011. I also note that the correspondence I am tabling was sent to the former Attorney on 21 February. The CTIQ also sent the opposition a copy for reference. I table a copy of that correspondence.

Tabled paper: Bundle of correspondence from the Community Titles Institute Queensland Ltd relating to the Neighbourhood Disputes Resolution Bill [4177].

I ask the Attorney-General to outline whether the concerns of the CTIQ have been addressed since the bill was first put into the House.

One of the most important outcomes of this bill will be its effect on QCAT. I recently met with the staff at QCAT as obviously this bill will have an enormous impact on it as it will be given the jurisdiction to deal with all the complaints. The title of the bill is the Neighbourhood Disputes Resolution Bill which, in itself, implies the bill is about resolving neighbourhood disputes. We in this House know that the bill only resolves dividing fence and overhanging tree dispute issues.

The government needs to ensure that QCAT is not flooded with complaints and applications for resolution of every other neighbourhood dispute. Prior to this debate I did have a quick conversation with the Attorney-General about the name of the bill and the potential burden this may create for QCAT. I would hate to think QCAT would be in a situation where it is receiving complaints of nuisance cats and dogs, loud parties or anything like that. We want to avoid that situation arising for QCAT. QCAT is still in the experimental stage of its formation and we have to watch closely the workload of QCAT and its productivity in terms of delivering better, cheaper and effective client services for Queenslanders.

I now foreshadow an amendment that I will be moving with respect to the name of the bill. I think just by calling the bill the Neighbourhood Disputes Resolution Bill it implies to the public, when they are looking at the record and are on the internet site looking at how to resolve this type of dispute, that this bill looks at all types of disputes, which of course it does not. We are only talking here about dividing fences and tree disputes. The amendment I have spoken to the Attorney-General about will essentially add a few words to the title of the bill. It will then read the Neighbourhood Disputes Resolution (Dividing Fence and Trees) Bill. I think that will give clarity.

I have met personally with QCAT staff and that is one of the big issues they raised with me. They see the potential problem being people assuming that this bill covers all these other complaints, which in actual fact it does not. We know that the resources in QCAT are scarce. It is already expecting to have an increase in workload based on the fence and tree component of the bill.

I am advised by QCAT staff that they actually have one full-time officer who is now ready to take on the challenge of these new applications into QCAT. I congratulate QCAT for realising that this bill is on its way. Having one dedicated person to look at the implementation of this bill, how this is going to impact on QCAT and the register that QCAT will now be required to maintain is good.

As I said, I will be moving an amendment in the consideration in detail stage that sends a message about the intent of the bill—that is, that it specifically deals with the old dividing fences act and trees and

overhanging branches adjoining common boundaries. I would appreciate government support for this very minor amendment, given that it was the legislative agenda which created QCAT in the first place that we streamline the justice system and not overburden QCAT. I would hate to see anything overburden QCAT. I think this is a way that we can potentially avoid that conflict. The amendment would simply add the words 'dividing fence and trees'.

I would appreciate from the Attorney-General any information on any form of education campaign that has been devised to coincide with the introduction of these changes and how much money has been set aside to inform the community of these changes in the form of an education campaign. With the old system, if people had issues with large trees they were required to start actions of nuisance. It was very convoluted. This will hopefully streamline the process of those disputes.

In summation, I restate that I am certainly not and the opposition is certainly not opposing the bill, but, as I mentioned, we do have well-founded reservations about the practical implications of some of the aspects of the bill. I would appreciate the Attorney-General's support with respect to our amendment so as to not create confusion in the community about what this bill is about. QCAT has advised me that that is its major concern. I do not see it as a major amendment if we add the words that essentially get to the heart of the bill—that is, 'dividing fence and trees'. Otherwise we will see QCAT getting applications dealing with barking dogs, cars parked on footpaths and, as the Attorney-General would know, even the occasional loud party. We do not want QCAT dealing with situations which it does not deserve to deal with.

I will conclude my comments by saying to the Attorney-General that in general we support the bill. I would appreciate feedback in terms of the issues I have raised and with respect particularly to the amendments that I have foreshadowed I will be moving in the consideration in the detail stage.