



Speech By  
**Corrine McMillan**


**MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD**

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Record of Proceedings, 6 September 2018

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**Mount Gravatt East, Development**

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (2.49 pm): I rise to address an issue that is causing great concern to the constituents of my electorate of Mansfield, particularly the suburb of Mount Gravatt East. In May, the community of Mount Gravatt East in Coolong, Nurrana and Carrara streets awoke to the sound of chainsaws as contractors cleared mature native trees from three adjoining house blocks totalling 6,794 square metres. At the end of the day, not a single tree was left standing.

Naturally, the residents were incensed to learn that a developer had purchased these three blocks, zoned low-density residential since its gazettal in 1967. The developer cleared the site and plans to establish 32 two-storey four-bedroom townhouses. This site has no street frontage except for a single driveway. Inquiries to the Brisbane City Council confirmed that, notwithstanding significant site works having already commenced, no development application had been lodged. Naturally, the residents of the area were concerned about the impact that this proposal would have on their community and began to mobilise. The Mount Gravatt East Townhouse Development Action Group was formed. A petition calling on the Brisbane City Council to act, which has 835 signatories, has been circulated. I table this petition.

*Tabled paper:* Nonconforming petition regarding town house development in Mount Gravatt East [[1311](#)].

Like these residents, I have two serious concerns. One is the apparent weakness of Brisbane City Council planning regulations that allows for such works even before a development application has been lodged. The local Brisbane city councillor was quick to point out that she has no direct influence on planning decisions and that the council employs professional town planners for that. That may be true, although it is an interesting separation of powers. It is also true that the regulations that guide town planning are determined by our elected councillors. The residents are of the view that it is only by direct and concerted action by them that they can influence council development decisions. I am inclined to agree with them.

The second concern is habitat destruction. In this term, one of the first pieces of legislation passed in this place pertained to vegetation management. The basic tenet of this legislation was that, as a society, we cannot continue to condone the wholesale destruction of native vegetation. Yet in this case a developer was able to clear-fell the equivalent of three residential blocks.

As legislators, we have an obligation to ensure that quality of life is not compromised by uncontrolled development. I commend the residents of the Mount Gravatt East community for taking a stand to protect their lifestyle and to keep inappropriate developments out of residential neighbourhoods.