

## **DUFFY HOUSE, WOODVALE**

### *Grievance*

**MRS J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI (Kingsley)** [9.50 am]: My grievance today is to the Minister for Planning and is about the future of Duffy House. Duffy House is a historical building situated near Duffy Terrace, Woodvale, in Yellagonga Regional Park. The site on which the house is located was purchased in 2014 by the state government and is currently owned by the Western Australian Planning Commission. To my knowledge, Duffy House is the oldest remaining building in the Joondalup area and is an important part of our local European history. The house was built by the Duffy family, one of the local pioneering families in the Wanneroo–Joondalup area, and it was built by hand using local limestone cut from Perry’s Paddock, a short way away. The limestone was cut and moved to the site block by block. Duffy House was built by Frederick John Duffy and Eva Matilda Cockman, who were both from Wanneroo–Joondalup pioneering families. The surrounding land was worked by the family as a market garden and later as a dairy. The house and its links to the history and development of Woodvale specifically and the Wanneroo–Joondalup area more broadly have important cultural significance to the local community and the Duffy family. Although the house has tremendous local significance, it unfortunately does not meet the threshold for listing on the state register of heritage places.

Duffy House has been vacant for a number of years, with no maintenance regime put in place. This, coupled with the evident antisocial behaviour in the building, has seen the building deteriorate to the extent that it now presents a potential hazard to the local community. Given the location of Duffy House, approximately 250 metres into the park, it is visible from the road, but far enough away to enable antisocial behaviour such as graffiti and drug taking. Earlier this year, a grandmother and her grandson found a dead mother kangaroo on the floor of the house and a joey strung up in a noose. Although the police and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions assured me that both animals were dead before being taken to Duffy House, the community is understandably very upset by this event.

After the WAPC took ownership of the land in 2014, a proposal was presented to the City of Joondalup to match funding to restore the building under the area assistance grant scheme and to excise the house, a curtilage and an access way from the parent lot to be placed under the management of the city. The city rejected this offer. Best practice for the restoration and conservation of heritage buildings is sympathetic adaptive reuse—a use that is sympathetic to the original use of the building and allows for activation, which in turn provides passive surveillance and discourages antisocial behaviour in and around the heritage building. With this in mind, I met with the minister’s office, the Western Australian Planning Commission, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and the City of Joondalup, and suggested a potential adaptation to the previous proposal. The state government would contribute an amount of money towards the restoration of Duffy House and would allow the City of Joondalup to undertake a limited commercial lease, such as a tea rooms, cafe or an art gallery. I was grateful and excited in May when the minister announced that the Western Australian Planning Commission would offer \$150 000 with no requirement for the City of Joondalup to match it dollar for dollar. Unfortunately, this offer was again rejected by the City of Joondalup which cited, among other things, an unexpected cost of remediating the site from asbestos.

Given the state of the house and the apparent reluctance of the City of Joondalup to listen to its own residents’ desires to see the house maintained, I can understand the Western Australian Planning Commission’s position that the house should be demolished on safety grounds, as the building is becoming very deteriorated and is being vandalised by people who use it as a drug house. However, my local community and I are very passionate about saving this house. I have been contacted by numerous residents. According to my notes, they said —

Please save Duffy House. It is so important to our Wanneroo history.

Duffy House has earned its place in our history and in our future.

I have lived in Woodvale for 24 years and truly appreciate the fact that we have remnants of our past history still standing.

Far too much of our history has been lost. Please do your utmost to ensure that Duffy House is not added to the list.

In response to the growing concern, I have held a number of street-corner meetings that were very well attended by local residents, all of whom were very supportive of the restoration and the adaptive reuse. They staunchly oppose the demolition of Duffy House. Duffy House is an important part of our local history in Woodvale and the wider Wanneroo–Joondalup area. There is overwhelming community support for saving Duffy House. I ask the minister to please consider what is in the best interest of my community.

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Planning)** [9.55 am]: I thank the member for Kingsley for his grievance today. I understand the passion and dedication of the member in relation to this project, in particular

holding committee meetings, getting direct feedback from local residents and constituents, and bringing that feedback to the Parliament and me as minister.

As the member for Kingsley has highlighted, Duffy House is significant to the local history of Wanneroo and Joondalup and the site's listing on the City of Joondalup's municipal heritage list reflects the local significance. However, Duffy House has been considered twice by the Heritage Council of WA for registration on the state register of heritage places, but has not reached its particular threshold. In November 2009, the City of Joondalup nominated Duffy House for entry in the state register of heritage places. The Heritage Council's register committee determined that it warranted detailed assessment; however, the then owner refused to allow access to the house. In November 2012, the Heritage Council's register committee reconsidered Duffy House and determined it was unlikely to meet the state threshold, and further detailed assessment ceased. Following the transfer of the site to the Western Australian Planning Commission in December 2017, a condition report deemed it was beyond being economically viable to repair and demolition was considered. This prompted the City of Joondalup to renominate the place to the Heritage Council.

In February 2018, Duffy House was reconsidered by the Heritage Council and full heritage assessment was requested for the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage. After considering the full heritage assessment in April this year the Heritage Council resolved that the place did not meet the threshold of the heritage register. The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage basically started the process in relation to the demolition of Duffy House, pending transfer of the land to Conservation and Parks Commission, as part of the Yellagonga Regional Park. The commission would not accept management of the current structure in place and the application was suspended following objections from the city and the strong advocacy in particular from the member for Kingsley. The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage presented an offer to the City of Joondalup for the city to be granted a future crown reserve with a management order over the land occupied by Duffy House and a suitable curtilage together with an access road. To assist with the restoration, as the member detailed, the Western Australian Planning Commission and the department offered \$150 000. In June this year, the Joondalup council resolved to continue to liaise, but rejected that sum and requested more funds. The city also resolved not to provide any matching funding to the Western Australian Planning Commission grant offer, which was disappointing, because it would be of immense local benefit. The city saw some importance in the site, but could not prioritise its budget to provide any funding for it. The city is seeking that the Western Australian Planning Commission fund the entire cost, with the city then assuming recurrent management cost. That highlights some issues the member mentioned. In particular, local activation would have a good community benefit. As we said, this has put the Western Australian Planning Commission in a difficult position. There was money on the table but the city rejected it. The city, of course, opposes a demolition, but it has not come to the table. As a result, the chairman of the Western Australian Planning Commission, Mr David Caddy, has advised that the commission is prepared to make one last offer to the city of an area assistance grant of \$300 000 towards the restoration and community use of Duffy House. That is our last offer. We hope that the City of Joondalup accepts that offer and really creates a community asset for future generations to enjoy.

I thank the member for Kingsley for her advocacy on behalf of local residents, for her passion for this area and for trying to build a community asset for families today and in the future that is also a link to the heritage of the area. I thank her for her passionate support and advocacy. I hope this new, final offer of \$300 000 will be accepted by the City of Joondalup and that it will manage the area for the future.