

## National Trust of Queensland

### QUEENSLAND HERITAGE REGIME

Heritage conservation is implemented in Queensland through two Acts:

- *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*
- *Integrated Planning Act 1997*

#### ***Queensland Heritage Act 1992*** (QHA)

QHA was preceded by an earlier Act two years prior. This was introduced as an interim measure while the proposed Act went through Government and consultative processes.

The main elements of QHA are as follows:

- QHA provides for the formation of a statutory body called the Queensland Heritage Council (QHC) to provide advice to Government, as well as having decision-making powers in regard to the inclusion of places in the Queensland Heritage Register, and for any subsequent development applications.
- QHA also provides for the formation of a Queensland Heritage Register (QHR). The processes are similar to all heritage regimes, allowing for assessment by criteria and appeal processes. It is imperative that places entered in the QHR are proven to be of State significance, there having been successful challenges in the Planning and Environment Court in this regard.
- There are some 1,400 places on the QHR. No precincts have been entered in QHA.
- QHA was amended in 2004 to allow for development applications to be submitted through the Integrated Development Assessment System (IDAS) as included in the *Integrated Planning Act 1997* (IPA). (See following section)
- The 2004 amendments also allowed for the registration of precincts for the first time.

Administration of the QHA is as follows:

- The Cultural Heritage Branch (CHB) is located in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Head Office staff are primarily involved in policy and planning, with operations being administered through regional offices located in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Brisbane and Toowoomba. The QHC secretariat is located in Head Office.
- All applications, whether they be nominations to the QHR or for development go through a process called 'Ecoaccess'.
- Comments have just closed on a review of the QHA. The Trust's submission emphasised the lack of staffing resources for proactive heritage work. Indeed, many regions find it difficult to meet statutory timeframes in the current circumstances.
- There is currently no incentive funding for heritage conservation in Queensland.

### ***Integrated Planning Act 1997***

IPA was introduced in 1997. This was the first time heritage provisions were specifically included in planning legislation in Queensland.

In summary, the provisions for heritage are as follows:

- All local governments (LGAs) were required to have a new IPA planning scheme in place 5 years after the introduction of the legislation in 1997. This timing was later extended.
- LGAs were required to identify “valuable features” which were defined to include historic and Indigenous heritage places. There has been a mixed response to this provision, with some LGAs doing professional heritage surveys and others resisting such work.
- The utilisation of valuable features in the planning provisions is not specified in IPA. A number of LGAs have introduced character area provisions, while some others have adopted their own heritage registers. Others have no heritage provisions.
- As mentioned IDAS fields all property-related applications, with a referral system in place for ‘State Interests’ one of which is inclusion on the QHR. Thus all QHR development applications are made through a LGA.

### **Comments**

1. There are statutory timing problems with the use of the IDAS system for heritage development applications in that with the QHC committee system for development assessment, complex developments can not be readily dealt with within the IDAS timing.
2. This timing problem is causing dissatisfaction, particularly with major developers.
3. The EPA’s Ecoaccess system is really designed to make scientific ecological decisions, and is not catering for the needs of heritage. For example, the system only allows officers to have one meeting with proponents and this is not helping find consultative solutions for complex heritage issues.
4. There is also a perceived lack of consistency in the decision of the QHC.
5. Overall, with the range of activity being undertaken by LGAs, there is no longer a clear public understanding of the heritage regime. Thus, with some Councils operating their own register, there is confusion on what is ‘listed’ and what is not, and on the implications of registration at the two levels of government.
6. All this has resulted in a recent review of the QHA. The National Trust believes there needs to be an overall policy and strategy for heritage in Queensland.

National Trust of Queensland

**SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY**

**1. Membership**

The National Trust of Queensland (NTQ) has, at 30 June 2005, approximately 9,600 members in Queensland.

Membership peaked at approximately 10,800 in the late 1980s.

**2. Governance**

NTQ is governed by the *National Trust of Queensland Act 1963* and the *Currumbin Bird Sanctuary Act 1976*. Changes to the NTQ Act in the late 1990s resulted in a re-defining the organisation as a Statutory Body, making it also accountable under various other State legislation such as financial and audit requirements, investment matters etc.

The governing body is a Council with ten elected members and ten appointed members. Only elected members can be office bearers. For a number of years there has been an average of 5 appointed Councillors as a number of bodies that have the ability to appoint a representative, have chosen not to do so.

NTQ is currently working with Government to achieve major changes to the governance structure. Council has resolved that it wishes to become a company limited by guarantee.

**3. Properties**

NTQ owns historic property assets of some \$9M, and Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary (CWS) with assets of some \$25M.

The properties are as follows:

**CWS, Gold Coast** – separate advisory Board. Has suffered with a general downturn in international tourism on the Gold Coast and is seeking to re-position itself in the domestic market.

**Wolston House, Wacol** (See separate case study)

**Moon's Reserve, Brookfield** Land commemorating the pioneers of Brookfield. Not open to the public generally.

**Royal Bulls Head Inn, Toowoomba** Open to the public as a house museum. An alternative use to be found.

**Little Goat Island, off Donnybrook** Not open to the public. Has been recently put on the market.

**Brennan & Geraghty's Store, Maryborough** (plus an adjacent house that is leased) A unique place with 100,000 original items as contents.

**Townsville Heritage Centre** Open to the public as a house museum, but also contains in the complex a leased flat and one building leased to a community organization.

**Zara Clark Museum, Charters Towers** A major regional museum open to the public

**Lyalls Store, Charters Towers** Leased

**Stock Exchange Arcade, Charters Towers** All shops leased

**School of Mines Building, Charters Towers** Leased from the Queensland Government. Currently leased for a variety of community purposes.

**Atherton Chinatown and Hou Wang Temple** (See separate case study)

**James Cook Museum, Cooktown** (See separate case study)

**Powder Magazine, Cooktown** Can only be viewed from the exterior.

**Tent House, Mt Isa** Random opening to the public.

Generally, NTQ makes a loss of approximately \$150,000 annually on properties. This has been reduced from around \$220,000 three years ago. NTQ has sold two properties in recent years. It has also transferred one that was held under the reserve system to the Charters Towers City Council.

The purpose of the properties is education and awareness.

#### 4. **Identification of Places of Significance**

This has been a major role of the Trust throughout its history. Some 1,500 places have been researched and registered. This work has been the basis of NTQ's advocacy work for the conservation of significant places.

This work has expanded in recent years to provide a focus on places of local significance, resulting in a wider data base of important places. NTQ intends to focus on the emerging role of local government authorities in historic heritage.

#### 5. **Heritage Conservation Appeals**

NTQ has operated numerous tax-deductible conservation appeals for many years for properties it does not own. Currently it has 22 such appeals operating, the majority of which are for churches. In round figures some \$15M has been raised in the last decade.

#### 6. **Finances**

NTQ has an operating budget of approximately \$900,000, with CWS operating separately with a budget of approximately \$10M.

NTQ has been operating at a loss for some years, and reserves are below the desired level. A major current difficulty is the lack of Commonwealth or State grants for heritage conservation, resulting in no ability for capital expenditure on properties.

Government support funding is approximately \$70,000 from the Commonwealth (subject to CPI), and \$50,000 from the Queensland Government. The latter has been the same since 1994/95 with no CPI. The State Government also provides office space to the value of approximately \$80,000.

Sponsorship income (NTQ only) averages \$60,000 per annum.

NTQ is not in a sound financial position, having to sell properties to remain solvent in recent years. Work continues in seeking solutions to the systemic shortage of funds, including discussions on a service agreement with Government. (For example, Government has recently made new funds of \$2.75M available for a state-wide heritage audit and discussions have been held on NTQ undertaking the community consultation aspect of the work for a fee.)

NTQ has also established a perpetual foundation and is actively seeking bequests.

#### **7. Staff and Volunteers**

Head Office staff numbers 5.2 FTEs, with a contractor for marketing and publications. There are 4 full-time property managers, plus a number of part-time and casual staff. Regular volunteers number approximately 400 with others providing assistance for one-off functions.

CWS has 120 FTEs with a regular volunteer band of some 60 people.

#### **8. Promotional activities**

NTQ produces four newsletters a year, plus a number of property brochures. It also undertakes the Queensland Heritage Awards in partnership with the Queensland Heritage Council. The awards have operated for 30 years.

Recent activity includes the popular Queensland Heritage Icons.

NTQ updated its web page several years ago and has increased use of the site for events information as well as advocacy.

National Trust of Queensland

CASE STUDY

**Hou Wang Temple, Atherton**

Project Name

Hou Wang Temple, Atherton

Description

The Hou Wang Temple is a corrugated iron structure built in 1903 in the then Atherton Chinatown. Chinatown, on the edge of the town of Atherton, was a thriving Chinese settlement servicing some 1,000 people living within the district, around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The land owned by the National Trust of Queensland (NTQ) includes much of the Chinatown area.

The temple contains a number of its original furnishings and ornamentation, all of which was carved in China. Visiting Chinese have remarked on the rarity of such items in their homeland noting that similar items were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution.

Adjacent to the NTQ land is another building known as the Old Post Office which is owned by the Atherton Shire Council. This building is shared between the two parties, and features an interpretation centre, retail area and an art gallery.

Significance

Hou Wang Temple and Atherton Chinatown are included in the Queensland Heritage Register and the Register of the National Estate. The temple has a high level of significance as the only remaining corrugated iron temple in Australia and New Zealand. (They were once relatively common.) It is likely that the temple is of international significance as a demonstration of the role of Chinese in the development of northern Australia and the influence of Chinese migration on emerging nations.

Chinese people initially came to the Palmer Goldfields in the 1880s and from there spread out to farm (bananas, maize etc) and operate shops and other businesses. These people often undertook an epic journey from the Northern Territory to Queensland, with those who could not afford boat travel, walking from the Pine Creek district some 2000 kilometres away.

The temple was offered to NTQ in 1976 by the Fong On family, whose father had chosen to take the coastal steamer from the Northern Territory. Others, like Lee Leong, a fellow resident at Atherton had taken the more arduous overland option.

Key Dates

- Planning for the temple started about 1896
- Built in 1903
- Condition report (grant) 1978 and volunteer cataloguing of the contents
- Acquired at no cost by NTQ in 1980

- Preliminary archaeological evaluation by Latif Ibrahim, James Cook University, Townsville
- Initial stabilisation including roof and flashings, stumps in 1980
- Further repair work including kitchen and store in 1983
- Artefacts researched and documented and site surveys completed by James Cook University 1986- 87
- Opened by volunteers (Friends of the Hou Wang Temple) on Sundays through the 1980s and much of the 90s.
- Selected site archaeological excavations completed by James Cook University
- Major conservation, upgrading and interpretation from 1999 to 2001 with \$1.3 M Federation funds through the Queensland Heritage Trails Network.

## Statistics

### 1. **Capital Expenditure**

- Archaeological Assessment (JCU) 1981	c \$15,000
- Archaeological site survey (NEGP) 1986	c\$10,000
- Reconstruction of pagoda 1987	\$18,500
- Further Works, kitchen and Store 1994	c\$8,000
- Business Plan 1998 (Arts Qld grant)	\$5,866
- Conservation of painted panels 1996	c\$4,000
- Fire and security Systems 1998 (Reef Casino Benefit Fund)	\$22,000
- 1999 - 2001 Commonwealth Federation grant	\$1.3 M*

\* The \$1.3M project funded further restoration of the temple (there were still problems with parts of the roof, plus a major structural problem in the area of the altar which had subsided) as well as conservation of the contents, cataloguing and conservation of the archaeological collection and the interpretation centre with a best-practice display.

### 2. **Operating Expenditure**

It is not possible to ascertain a clear figure on this for the main reason that Head Office salaries have never been apportioned in regard to the operation of properties.

### 3. **Annual Figures**

Prior to the Temple being open to the public seven days a week in September 2001, the limited funds achieved by the Friends of Hou Wang Temple were retained by that group for day-to-day care of the building.

- 2002/03	(50,930)
- 2003/04	(39582)
- 2004/05	(45,000) est

#### 4. **Annual Visitation**

- 2002/03	5,201
- 2003/04	6,914
- 2004/05	6,150

#### 5. **Employment and Volunteers**

There is one full-time manager employed at the site, with several casual staff trained as necessary fill-ins, and for weekend work. There is a team of 18 trained volunteers who conduct the tours of the temple. The paid staff are physically placed in the retail area and interpretation centre, whereas the volunteers take the tours in the temple which is located some 400 metres away from the other building.

There is a volunteer Management Committee comprising the manager, a representative of the volunteers and representatives of the Atherton Shire Council and an archaeologist.

#### 6. **Impact**

Hou Wang Temple and Chinatown has been linked in with tourism for the region. There is a strong push to develop tourism on the Atherton Tablelands (marketed as the Cairns Highlands) including increasing over-night stays and the site features as one of the major emerging tourism attractions for the region. Whilst it is difficult to measure the flow on effects at this stage, the complex is recognized by the tourism industry as a major contributor to developing tourism.

#### 7. **Opportunities**

The Trust has been working on a proposal to develop the research on the Chinese people who came to Australia in the early period, and what happened to those who returned to China. This is seen as a project that will undertake research on the story from the Chinese point of view.

There is an epic story of Chinese in northern Australia that is not well known in this country. With the increase in tourism from China, it is seen as important that we provide those people with knowledge in their own language of the story and historical linkages.

The proposal has been discussed at various government levels, as well as with the Embassy of the Peoples' Republic of China, and has received significant support. Further discussions will take place with Cairns tourism and commercial interests.

It is possible that the site will link to a major Chinese historic interpretation centre in Cairns, with the development of 'Chinese gardens' at Atherton as an additional draw card.

## 8. Conclusion

The Hou Wang temple and associated Chinatown site have been recognized as significant for over 30 years, and its donation to NTQ in the 1970s is indicative of the vital role of the National Trusts in heritage conservation.

There were limited funds over a number of years, resulting in priorities being set for urgent stabilisation works and such works being undertaken in a number of small projects. It should be noted that undertaking conservation works in this fashion has resulted in a higher level of administration (e.g. multiple small grant applications and acquittals) than is the case in one-off larger projects.

There were also no funds available for the employment of staff until the major project was undertaken. NTQ also received a \$50,000 'establishment' grant through Regional Solutions for the first year of operation of the temple. This funding allowed for a higher than normal level of marketing to take place in that first year. It also allowed for proper training of volunteers in aspects such as tour guiding as well as necessities such as first aid.

The property has achieved some 6,500 visitors per year, but requires at least 8,000 to break even. NTQ is confident that this will be achieved within another two years.

Even now staffing levels and, in particular, marketing activities are constrained by the absence of seed funding to stimulate visitation levels. It is noteworthy that Paronella Park, at nearby Innisfail an ornate early twentieth century house built by a Portuguese migrant, has, in the past decade, increased its visitation levels from 8000 to around 200000. The owners attribute that spectacular growth to dedicating a high percentage of their budget to marketing.

In the process Paronella Park has clearly demonstrated that, given the right stimulus, heritage places, like the Hou Wang Temple, have a capacity far in advance of that currently experienced.

## National Trust of Queensland

### CASE STUDY

#### **James Cook Museum, Cooktown**

##### Project Name

James Cook Museum, Cooktown

##### Description

James Cook Museum (the property) is a two-storey brick building. It was erected by the Sisters of Mercy as Saint Mary's Convent in 1889. It was a most prominent building in Cooktown, up on a rise overlooking a wonderful western view.

The Trust achieved a major Bicentennial grant of \$2.3 M in 1998/99. The property was expanded with a new section at the rear specifically for housing the *Endeavour* anchor and cannon, both on loan from the National Museum. This funding also saw major conservation of the collection.

##### Significance

James Cook Museum is on the Queensland Heritage Register and the Register of the National Estate. It demonstrates historic significance through its origins with the Sisters of Mercy. It was the only place in north Queensland that provided secondary education for girls. The building was used by American soldiers during World War 11 and then as the Cooktown Museum, displaying a large collection of artifacts including telling the story of James Cook and the *Endeavour*.

The Sisters evacuated to Herberton in early 1942, and never returned. The building gradually declined into a derelict state, and was to be demolished by the Catholic Church in the 1960s. The new National Trust of Queensland became involved at the request of the people of Cooktown and Sir Raphael Cilento called a public meeting. There had been a Cooktown Museum for some time but the collection had grown beyond an ability to house it – a new museum was required. The Church then gave the building to the Trust in 1969. Work went ahead quickly to meet a target of opening the building in the bicentenary of Cook's time in Cooktown in 1770. This was achieved with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth opening the property as a museum in April 1970.

##### Key Dates

- Acquired at no cost by NTQ in 1969
- Initial stabilisation through donations which matched a \$6,000 grant from the Queensland Government.
- Opened as a museum in 1970
- Major upgrading from 1999 to 2001

## Statistics

### 1. **Capital Expenditure**

- Early expenditure not readily available	
- 1994/95 NEGP Stairs repair	6,376
- 1995/96 Museum grant Cook Gallery display	8,900
- 1997/98 Qld Community History –booklet	2,240
- 1997/98 Qld Heritage Grant – fire safety	7,500
- 1998/99 Gaming Community Fund –computer	6,376
- 1999 Commonwealth Federation grant	\$2.3 M

### 2. **Operating Expenditure**

It is not possible to ascertain a clear figure on this for the main reason that Head Office salaries have never been apportioned in regard to the operation of properties.

### 3. **Annual Figures**

JCM has consistently run at a profit.

- 1985/86	6,903
- 1986/87	15,885
- 1987/88	44,879
- 1988/89	14,163
- 1989/90	24,532
- 1990/91	52,732
- 1991/92	25,068
- 1992/93	29,752
- 1993/94	35,297
- 1994/95	57,769
- 1995/96	34,274
- 1996/97	61,243
- 1997/98	56,538
- 1998/99	47,392
- 1999/20	28,805
- 2000/01	5,199
- 2001/02	1,065
- 2002/03	51,700
- 2003/04	29,843

The museum was closed for parts of the 2000/01 and 2001/02 years because of the major addition being built on the rear.

The property provided a residence for staff (a married couple) for many years. This adjacent building is now a resource centre.

#### 4. **Annual Visitation**

Visitation to the property has always been higher than other NTQ properties. Major factors for this include the fact that the museum tells a 'national story' that is well-known. JCM has a reputation that is often remarked upon by visitors.

There is also considerable tourist travel to Cape York Peninsula, it having increased since 4WD vehicles became fashionable. Driving to the northern tip of the country remains popular. There are also regular day boat trips from Port Douglas, and recently cruise ships have commenced a day stop in Cooktown.

The road from Mareeba to Cooktown was notoriously bad. It has been gradually upgraded with bitumen for 4 years and at the end of the 2006 dry season will be sealed all the way.

Since the major upgrade, annual visitation has increased from approximately 17,000 to 25,500. The figures can still be somewhat erratic as there are always elements that can impact on tourism in the tropics – late wet seasons, cost of fuel etc.

#### 5. **Employment and Volunteers**

There is a full-time manager and casual staff. The latter is pushing salary costs up, and a second full-time job as a job share is being considered as a better expenditure of funds.

There are no volunteers for the museum. Cooktown has a small population (averaging 1,400) with a number of people being transient. Thus it is difficult to attract volunteers and efforts to do so have not been successful.

#### 6. **Impact**

JCM is a key element of tourism in Cooktown. It has the highest visitation of any destination in the town, and is most likely contributing to a flow-on effect for the town and the region.

#### 7. **Opportunities**

JCM has had a major upgrade with the \$2.3 M Federation grant and no further upgrades are planned for the short-term. However, it should be noted that the level of funding required to conserve the collection and provide best-practice interpretation is indicative of the 'hidden liabilities' that the property carried for many years – even though it made a profit.

#### 8. **Conclusion**

JCM has, in many ways, always been a successful National Trust property. There had been much criticism in Cooktown that NTQ was milking the profits to support other properties and not putting enough back into the property. The upgrade has seen a stronger working relationship with the Shire Council and the community generally.

## National Trust of Queensland

### CASE STUDY

#### **Wolston House, Wacol**

##### Project Name

Wolston House, Wacol. (Wacol is a far western suburb of Brisbane)

##### Description

Wolston House (the property) is a long, low set stone and brick farm house, located on the edge of the Brisbane River at Wacol. It was commenced in 1852 as part of the settlement pattern along the Brisbane River in the post-convict era.

Its oldest section is brick, commenced by a prominent colonial bureaucrat. It was sold in 1860 and developed by the one family for 46 years as a dairy farm. During that time the house was developed with stone sections on either side of the central brick section. A children's wing was also built at the rear. A second long-term family held the property then until the 1960s when it was re-sold for a short time before being bought by the Queensland Government as part of an agricultural field station.

The National Trust of Queensland (NTQ) was formed in 1963. It lobbied the government about the significance of Wolston House, resulting in a section of the field station being excised and the property given to NTQ. Wolston was NTQ's first building.

Much of the early work at the property was undertaken through donations. NTQ's President at the time was Sir Raphael Cilento who took a personal interest in the property and influenced many others to do so. The house was in poor condition, and some of the early works such as the demolition of the children's wing, were done without the benefit of a *Burra Charter*.

##### Significance

Wolston House is on the Queensland Heritage Register and the Register of the National Estate. It is the only remaining example of an early farm house that demonstrates the 640 acre development pattern along the Brisbane River in the 1850s.

The property not only satisfies the accepted criteria for assessment of significance, but also has a strong 'existence value' for the people of Brisbane. School visits have been encouraged for three decades and many people in Brisbane have strong associations with the property.

##### Key Dates

- Acquired at no cost by NTQ in 1965
- Initial stabilisation through donations (\$4,000) in 1967 after extensive working bee clearing up. (e.g. one end of the building was covered with out-of-control creepers)
- Further work in the early 1970s – source of funds not readily available

- Antique Dealers Association assisted with the acquisition of furniture through donation in the 1970s
- The property was open to the public as a house museum in the early 1970s
- Construction of caretakers cottage in 1972
- Further works in 1976/77 – source of funds unknown
- National Estate Grant Program (NEGP) kicks in in 1978/79 and a list is provided below of works.

### Statistics

#### 1. **Capital Expenditure**

- 1978/79 Roof plumbing NEGP	15,000
- 1983/84 Road, toilets, education hut NEGP	41,000
- 1986/87 Verandahs NEGP	11,166
- 1987 Amatil (Bicentennial sponsor) Verandahs	80,000
- 1987/88 NEGP (work unclear)	15,000
- 1988/89 Jupiters Casino Community Fund	
Education video	11,137
- 1990 Donation Public utility area	10,000
- 1991/92 Interiors and floors NEGP	30,482
- 1999/20 Gaming Community Fund	
Outdoor furniture	7,500
- 1999/20 Gaming Community Fund	
Collections inventory	6,500
- 2004 Brisbane City Council display	6,500

In summary, the majority of capital funds have been NEGP at \$112,548 with donations coming a close second with \$94,000 known and a considerable amount, particularly for the furniture, unknown. Much of the early Australian furniture was purchased prior to prices dramatically rising for such furniture. Current valuation for the furniture is \$140,000 (with a policy of only valuing items over the value of \$2,000).

#### 2. **Operating Expenditure**

It is not possible to ascertain a clear figure on this for the main reason that Head Office salaries have never been apportioned in regard to the operation of properties.

#### 3. **Annual Figures**

Wolston House has consistently run at a loss.

- 1985/86	(8,476)
- 1986/87	(10,710)
- 1987/88	(11,665)
- 1988/89	(16,326)
- 1989/90	(14,408)
- 1990/91	(20,111)
- 1991/92	(18,684)
- 1992/93	(23,923)

- 1993/94	(21,035)
- 1994/95	(19,821)
- 1995/96	(26,071)
- 1996/97	(15,856)
- 1997/98	(3,048)
- 1998/99	264
- 1999/20	(1,830)
- 2000/01	(6,043)
- 2001/02	(11,419)
- 2002/03	(11,878)
- 2003/04	(19,527)

The property has had live-in caretakers since the 1970s. Arrangements appear to have been to pay these people very little or nothing at all, with them taking a percentage or all of the takings from the sale of morning teas etc. NTQ made a decision in recent years (after having an industrial relations complaint) to pay award wages.

Overall losses at properties have been offset by other sources of income, including some rental properties as well as membership fees. This situation does not appear to be sustainable into the future.

#### 4. Annual Visitation

It is only possible to provide figures for recent years. In 2000/01 visitation was 2,015, with year to date for 2004/05 being 1,518. During that time school visitation has dropped from 1,296 to 623, whereas group numbers have increased from 222 to 467. NTQ has been targeting the 50+ bus trip market only for the current financial year.

Thus numbers of visitors have never sustained Wolston House.

#### 5. Employment and Volunteers

Essentially NTQ has never had dollar-capital to invest in its properties. Its major investment has been through volunteers. Because the committee structure has changed over the years, it is not possible to accurately estimate the volunteer hours for Wolston House. However, through the 1970s and 80s there were three committees – management, events and furniture – and NTQ has a photographic record of some of the working bees. If one were to be conservative, a rough estimate of free time might include 30 people at 4 hpw x 40 wpy x 30 years – which rounds off to approximately 140,000 volunteer hours. There is currently a Wolston Support Group with about 30 volunteers.

Employment at Wolston House has consistently been two people. Currently we employ one person, and have a tenancy arrangement with special conditions for grounds maintenance for a second person.

NTQ employed architects (one at a time) for a period of some 20 years. All measured drawings and specifications in the later years were done in-house by that person. It is estimated that other head office staff time would include another 2 FTEs involving a range of people from the Director, accounts payable clerk and receptionist.

It is not possible to estimate the number of tradesmen who have worked at Wolston House. In recent years annual maintenance includes tradesmen to the value of approximately \$7,000 p.a.

## 6. **Impact**

Wolston House would appear to have had very little measurable impact on a regional economy.

The property is not readily marketable for tourism. Its location is in close proximity to a number of Correctional Centres.

## 7. **Opportunities**

Considerable recent planning for Wolston House has resulted in a decision to make the house more user-friendly and less of a static house museum. Actions have just commenced in this regard.

Walk-through-the-door visitation remains low, and will be phased out. The 50+ bus tour market is being successfully targeted and there has been an increase in activity this year.

A new fund has been established to build up funds to totally upgrade the utility area and to install a commercial kitchen in order that functions can develop.

The saving grace for Wolston House comes potentially with the proposed major developments in the Wacol area. The Queensland Government has recently completed a regional plan to deal with the increasing population in the south eastern region of the State. Wacol and the western corridor have been identified as a major development area. A Master Plan for the immediate Wacol area is current.

Government officers have recognised the importance of Wolston House as a historic connection in an area to be developed. They are currently planning to have a major recreational area some 500m to the north of Wolston House on the river and linking the house to that area. Preliminary talks have indicated the government's willingness to assist in the development of the house for day-to-day casual visitation as well as functions (e.g. increase of the area around the house, car park, café).

## 8. **Conclusion**

The development of the surrounding area may be the saving of Wolston House from a business sustainability point of view. It is interesting to note that the 'existence value' of the property has featured in the government's strategic planning.