

Bless this house, oh Mother Earth

By ROMY RANALLI

The site that will be home to Australia's most expensive house was blessed during a colourful and exotic traditional ceremony.

Radhika and Pankaj Oswal were joined by family members to welcome their guru who blessed the spot for their \$70 million house on the largest part of Warren Anderson's superblock on Bay View Terrace, Peppermint Grove.

They walked along a red carpet to a marquee filled with burning incense, fresh fruit and flowers and the sound of tapping bells.

Daughters Riddhi (4) and Vasundhara (10), who skipped school for the special day, danced,

laughed and nibbled on traditional Indian sweets.

They listened intently as their mother explained parts of the ceremony.

A Hindu priest led the ceremony, where gold, silver, gemstones, coconut, spices and rose petals were buried as a symbolic offering gesture to Mother Earth.

The family's guru, Bhaishri Rameshbhai Oza, explained the ceremony.

"We take permission for Mother Earth to dig and apologise in advance," he said.

He said it was an auspicious day that had been chosen because of the alignment of the planets.

The following day, almost 3500 people turned out to hear Bhaishri speak in a marquee set

up by the Oswal family on the Esplanade.

Also in attendance was the group, Friends of Australian Rock Art, who object to the Oswals' plan to build an explosives plant in the middle of the heritage-listed Burrup Peninsula.

They say the plant will be within 1km of a major rock art gallery.

Convenor Robin Chapple said: "Mr Oswal and his wife would be horrified if industry started chemically destroying the Hindu Gardens of Vrindaban, the Taj Mahal or the temple city of Vishnupur, and yet here they are proposing to build an explosives factory, with all the attendant pollution less than a kilometre from some of the world's oldest petroglyphs and culture."



Gold and gems were buried by the Oswal family to bring good karma to their new home.