



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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REGENT THEATRE

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (11.51 am): The people of Brisbane and Queensland have been led to believe that the Regent Theatre has been saved by the state government. This morning the Premier spoke about Queensland's top 150 state icons. I wish to put forward the case for the Regent Theatre. In February this year the state government announced that under the Integrated Planning Act 1997 it would issue a direction to the Brisbane City Council that the development application for the Regent Theatre as proposed by Multiplex will only be approved under the following condition: the development must preserve in its current state the four existing cinemas and associated areas identified in the attached map. The area outlined in the map points to the four existing cinemas and associated areas. This includes the bar area, which has used heritage materials from the original mezzanine, and the showcase No. 1 cinema, which contains scaled down fixtures and fittings from the historical 1929 auditorium. However, the only things heritage listed are the lobby and staircase, so unfortunately these areas are not protected from development or destruction.

In issuing the directive the state government supposedly recognised the historical significance of the Regent, as well as its importance to Brisbane residents. However, the new plans for the Regent issued on 10 September this year and referred to by the Deputy Premier in this place completely disregard the government's own directive in the following ways: the four existing cinemas, with a total seating capacity of 1,460, which were protected under the directive have now been replaced with three smaller scale theatres with a total seating capacity of 420. We will not be able to hold the Brisbane International Film Festival there. The directive states that the Regent Theatre site has been used continuously as a place to screen movies since 1929. However, under the new plan the Regent will only be accessible to the public on weekends. During other times, the spaces will be made available for meetings, conferences and other restricted entry events. The directive seems to have been changed without any public consultation or notification.

Heritage reports state that there is potential for serious damage to the heritage areas if the cinema box is demolished. This could result in irreparable damage to the heritage listed foyer and staircase, as well as the abovementioned historical fixtures and fittings not currently heritage listed. It seems that these revised development plans have not yet been released for public scrutiny.

Time expired.