




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

Record of Proceedings, 7 March 2024

ADJOURNMENT

Broadbeach Cultural Centre

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (6.05 pm): The House should be aware of a nonsensical proposal by the Gold Coast City council to demolish the fantastically popular Broadbeach Cultural Centre to replace it with a private consortium owned 10,000-seat entertainment venue. I am all for an entertainment venue on the Gold Coast, but to include this site as part of their planning considerations is absolutely ludicrous. The council has just spent \$15 million upgrading the cultural centre—formerly the Albert Waterways Community Centre—and to bulldoze this excellent community facility makes no sense at all.

There are four other locations that are included as possible sites for an entertainment venue and the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre is a standout location, in my view. It has ample parking, light rail access and fits fairly and squarely within the entertainment precincts of the Gold Coast. On the Broadbeach Cultural Centre site, we have the fabulous Life Education headquarters with Healthy Harold the giraffe doing a great job with our younger folk. Abutting this site is the Albert Waterways community kindergarten, a not-for-profit community group, that has been blindsided by council officers inquiring about the legal ownership of their kindergarten. I have news for the council officers: it is held in trust by deed to benefit the community—not council owned.

I am also advised that Life Education Centre has a nine-year unbreakable lease over their premises at the community centre which will make resumption of their entitlement a legal minefield. It beggars belief that this site was included by council officers as a possible location for a privately controlled development proposal which, in its current form, is one of the city's best used and most loved facilities in community ownership. I have sponsored a petition to parliament to exclude this site from consideration. I have letterboxed the immediate surrounding community to bring awareness to this farcical proposal. A Gold Coast scribe has said 'not to worry about it until the site is chosen', but as a former local government representative I can assure all and sundry that once a site is chosen, no amount of community consultation will turn back the decision.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr STEVENS: I was the mayor of Albert shire and the Gold Coast. Now is the time for the Gold Coast council to eliminate the Broadbeach Cultural Centre from the list of possible locations. Given the land ownership impediments and the community angst, council officers should focus their investigations on determining the best site for the entertainment venue from the other four locations and end the speculation about the demolition of this very possible community asset. This is no doubt in my mind that the Broadbeach Cultural Centre is one of the pre-eminent assets in the Mermaid Beach electorate and it should remain so forever and a day. A facility like that in a great location opposite the very busy Pacific Fair Shopping Centre would be irreplaceable if it was torn down, so why waste council officers' time and ratepayers' money by further investigating the site?

(Time expired)