



Hon Andrew McNamara MP
Member for Hervey Bay



28 JUL 2008

Minister for Sustainability,
Climate Change and Innovation

Ref: BNE12358
SU/08/2965

Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to your letter of 5 June 2008 concerning Petition No. 1067-08 about heritage issues at the Regent Theatre in Brisbane.

The importance of the Regent Theatre is recognised by its inclusion in the Queensland Heritage Register. The Regent Theatre, constructed in 1929, is Brisbane's iconic cinema of the early Hollywood picture palace era. Its prominent location in Queen Street, long association with major cultural events and ornate interiors have made it a place that is highly valued by the movie-going public and the performing arts community.

The original lavish auditorium had a dual function as a theatre and cinema. During the 1970s, this auditorium was demolished. As there were no State laws protecting heritage at that time, it was only as a result of a public campaign that parts of the theatre were retained and incorporated into the Hoyts Cinema Complex. When proposals to demolish the Regent Theatre were first floated in the 1970s, a petition with over 30,000 signatures was presented to Parliament.

At the commencement of the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*, the surviving elements of the original theatre, including the entry foyer, grand foyer and marble staircase, were entered in the Queensland Heritage Register. The Environmental Protection Agency will assess any redevelopment proposals to ensure that they conserve the heritage-listed place.

The listing does not, however, extend to any of the cinemas in the complex, which were constructed after the demolition of the original theatre. The Queensland Heritage Council, the independent statutory authority that decides what places are entered in the Queensland Heritage Register, considered the addition of further elements such as the projection box and surviving brick walls after they were nominated in 2007. The Council determined that these surviving fragments did not satisfy the stringent criteria for entry in the Queensland Heritage Register.

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In February this year, the Premier announced that any redevelopment of the Regent Theatre should preserve the Regent's use as a theatre and stated that to achieve this the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning would issue a Ministerial direction under the *Integrated Planning Act 1997*. Given the broad aims of the petition, as well as responding to you, I am also forwarding the petition to the Honourable Paul Lucas MP, Deputy Premier and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew McNamara". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrew McNamara MP
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