

## **MEDIA STATEMENT – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

*27 January 2023*

Badan Warisan Malaysia deplores Penang Island City Hall's (MBPP) approval to instruct the demolition of the Rex Cinema at Jalan Burma in Georgetown, Penang. This is despite the Mayor of City Council of Penang Island saying that flaws in the 2030 draft Penang Island local plan will be rectified, as reported in the media on 5 January 2023.

This 84 year-old Art Deco cinema possesses architectural, social, cultural and heritage significance not only for Penangites but for all Malaysians. It is imperative that we conserve and protect Rex Cinema for future generations to enjoy.

Preserving only the facade will not be enough. The Rex Cinema was built with significant interior Art Deco features and details, and these should be maintained. Art Deco architecture is much appreciated and celebrated all over the world.

Badan Warisan Malaysia strongly supports the heritage and conservation groups in Penang, and their great efforts made to preserve the historic heritage environment of Georgetown, Penang.

The recent demolition of Clove Hall residence, which is in proximity to Rex Cinema, is another irreplaceable loss of a historic piece of architecture of the island.

We wish and encourage MBPP to be more supportive and sensitive to preserve and protect Georgetown's rich built heritage, including buildings and sites beyond the UNESCO protected boundaries. It is this unique heritage that makes Penang one of the most significant places to visit in Malaysia.

Cities in Malaysia like Penang and Malacca that have many buildings and neighbourhoods of heritage value, must take the lead in preservation, conservation and other environmental matters. These cities must balance the old with the new and cannot always take the easy route to development. Local Authorities must be proactive in these matters.

*Lim Wei-Ling, President  
& Badan Warisan Malaysia Council 2023*

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### **About Badan Warisan Malaysia**

Badan Warisan Malaysia (The Heritage of Malaysia Trust) is the leading national heritage NGO established in 1983, as an independent registered charity. BWM works to raise awareness of heritage issues and advocate for a conservation-friendly environment in Malaysia. BWM works throughout Malaysia, cooperating with community groups, institutions, the private sector and all levels of Government to promote the conservation and preservation of our historic buildings and places. BWM plays a pivotal role in advocacy through a range of activities including heritage education, and we initiate research and documentation of our heritage assets and contribute to debates at international, national and local levels, on the quality of our built and cultural environment. For more information on BWM, please visit [badanwarisan.org.my](http://badanwarisan.org.my).