



## New theatre complex finally gets under way

Geoff Egan | 24th May 2013 6:00 AM



*DONE DEAL: Artist's impressions of the Riverlink Cinemas.*

Contributed

"All the plans are starting to come together.

AFTER lengthy delays construction has begun on the long-awaited Riverlink Cinemas.

Work is expected to be complete by early November, with the complex set to house eight theatres.

They will include two premium catered theatres and a club bar, a small number of retail outlets and a restaurant.

Leda Holdings, owners of Riverlink, announced a deal had been reached with Ipswich City Council regarding the development.

Leda had previously appealed the conditions the council had placed on the cinemas, taking the issue to the planning court.

Leda chairman Bob Ell said he was pleased the development was finally under way.

"This new cinema development has prompted activity in the designated restaurant precinct adjacent to the cinema complex and, very soon, Riverlink will be a one-stop facility to shop, dine and be entertained," he said.

"We have already started negotiations with well-known restaurant brands, which are keen to open at Riverlink."

Ipswich Mayor Paul Pisasale said the beginning of construction was a great milestone for the CBD.

"It's going to be great for the city," he said.



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"We've been talking to Leda and to Event Cinemas about this.

"Hopefully Event in the mall will be looking to upgrade and bringing Gold Class to Ipswich.

"It's going to be a bit of competition and that's a great thing."

Cr Pisasale said he didn't believe the growth of Riverlink was a negative thing for the CBD.

"We've got to stop thinking we have two centres. We have one CBD separated by the river," he said.

"With the development at Riverlink, Icon Ipswich, going up we're going to be seeing a lot of CBD activity."

The cinema will be operated by brand Limelight, which runs a cinema in the Leda-owned Tuggeranong Hyperdome in Canberra.

Leda described Limelight as a budget-priced operator offering cheap tickets and two premium theatres that would cater for those preferring a more indulgent experience.

Work was recently completed on a 360-bay car park, which forms a mezzanine level under the Eastern Mall, bringing the total car parks under the mall to more than 800.

A Riverlink spokeswoman said there would be no disruption to trade during the construction phase as the complex was to be positioned between BCF and Goodlife Gym, facing the river.



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