Appendix C  QHC Advice (25 October 2019 Presentation)
Re: Cross River Rail development for a new Exhibition Station at the Brisbane Exhibition Grounds

I write on behalf of the Queensland Heritage Council (Heritage Council) regarding the presentation given at its 25 October 2019 meeting about the developing design for a new Exhibition Station at the Brisbane Exhibition Grounds, a place on the Queensland heritage register (QHR). As the presentation explained, this is part of the Cross River Rail project and is intended to create a safe, accessible and functional train station for year-round use, as well as during the annual Royal Queensland Show or Ekka.

Firstly, I would like to thank you and representatives of the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority (CRRDA) and UNITY Alliance for presenting to the Heritage Council. It is important to keep the Council informed of the project's progress and proactively seek its advice before a report under section 71 of the Queensland Heritage Act 1992 (Heritage Act) is given in 2020.

As the CRRDA and UNITY will understand, the Brisbane Exhibition Grounds was entered as a State heritage place in the QHR because it was determined to demonstrate various aspects of cultural heritage significance, including historical, typological, aesthetic and social. As the QHR entry statement for cultural heritage criterion D explains, ‘... [t]here is a dynamic to the place, the form and composition of which has been evolving since its inception...’ And as the statement for criterion G outlines, generations of Queenslanders have a strong association with the Ekka and other events held at the place.

To inform further development of the design for the train station, rail corridor works and works associated with knitting the station into the place, the Heritage Council advises the following matters be considered:

- **The unique, iconic experience of underpasses:** The pedestrian and cattle underpasses provide long standing, memorable connections between the sides of the exhibition grounds separated by the rail line. If the pedestrian underpass must be re-formed to
provide for greater user numbers and to support the rail deck, the Heritage Council advises careful thought be given to how to evoke a memory of this gateway or pinch point. Significant stone fabric (Brisbane Tuff), as well as other significant fabric, that must be removed to provide for a new underpass should be reused as close as possible to its existing location. This will carry forward a tangible memory of this portal experience. The same caution should be applied to changes made to the cattle underpass.

- **Fig trees around Show Ring No. 2:** The Heritage Council has previously recommended conditioned removal of two mature fig trees from Show Ring No. 2 to enable widening of the rail corridor. Now that site access arrangements have changed, considerable protection of the remaining trees needs to be undertaken. A management plan setting out how this protection will occur should be provided with a future section 71 report.

- **Removal of the interwar toilet block:** While it is a utilitarian structure, the stand-alone interwar toilet block bordering Show Ring No. 2 and in the path of the expanded rail corridor is an important component of the place. The proposal to remove this block must be supported by detailed information about its intactness and consideration of options for mitigating this detrimental impact.

- **Illustrating the developing design:** The Heritage Council advises it is essential to explain how the station design works in sectional drawings and some kind of 3D or isometric representations. Drawings and images such as these will assist the Heritage Council understand how new or changed structures fit within the historic fabric of the Exhibition Grounds.

- **Interaction between new rail station and key public spaces:** The public spaces, particularly the open ones in which people move between Exhibition Grounds venues, are essential to the experience of the place and something to which generations of Queenslanders are strongly attached. Illustrating how these interactions are being designed is vital for the Heritage Council to understand how the scheme contributes to the social significance of the place and how it responds to its important characteristic elements. While individual features are listed in the statement for cultural heritage criterion D, it also outlines the importance of the spatial arrangement of features.

- **John MacDonald Stand and the new station’s platform shelter:** It is important that further investigation is undertaken into how the new platform structure for the station sits relative to the setting of the John MacDonald Stand. These studies should be illustrated with further comparative images. It is also important to expand on how the platform shelter is responding to the details of the John MacDonald Stand. This would include comparative images and/or drawings of the stand and the shelter. It is imperative that the development does not impact adversely on this important heritage building. As part of a future section 71 report for the development, the Heritage Council will require a management plan demonstrating how the building is protected during and after construction (i.e. when the rail line is operational).

- **Heritage interpretation:** This point intersects with others made above about the scheme responding to the values of the State heritage place. Interpretation is an important way to mitigate the detrimental impacts caused by the new rail station on the cultural heritage significance of the Exhibition Grounds and can be realised by means other than traditional ones such as signage. The Heritage Council would
encourage more detail be provided about what these other means might entail. In terms of reusing materials, as suggested above, this should occur as near to the site of the original feature as possible to aid people’s understanding of the place.

When a report is given under section 71 of the Heritage Act, it will be necessary for the Heritage Council to publish a public notice about the development, in response to which written submissions may be given. The Heritage Council must then consider the report and all submissions about the development, and make a recommendation to, the Chief Executive Officer of the CRRDA, Mr Graeme Newton.

Heritage Councillors would welcome a further presentation at a meeting before the end of 2019 and encourage continued engagement with the Department of Environment and Science (the department) about this presentation and preparation for submission of the section 71 report in 2020.

If you would like to discuss this advice further, please contact [redacted] Manager with the department on telephone [redacted] or via email to [redacted]@des.qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

Chair