



Speech by
Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Wednesday, 24 November 2010

CROSS RIVER RAIL

Ms GRACE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (11.54 am): It is hard to believe that Brisbane still has only one cross-river rail line, but with the government's Cross River Rail project that is about to change. History was in the making on 11 November when, with Minister Nolan, I attended the release of the reference design for the Cross River Rail project. For the first time the reference design brings together all the details of the project, including the tunnel alignment, station designs and construction plans.

We all know that the Ekka and the Gabba are Australian icons, and the cross-river rail would directly link the two, with permanent stations located on the transport network where thousands of people a day will use them to travel to work and home and attend sporting and other events. Features of the 18-kilometre cross-river rail will include underground stations at Roma and Albert Streets, together with the new Ekka station proposed to be located at the showgrounds on O'Connell Terrace. The station will be a real boost to the renewal of the entire Bowen Hills urban development area, including the showground precinct, and will transform the way people travel to the RNA event and the nearby RBWH.

Currently, each year the Exhibition station operates only two weeks in August for the Ekka but will change to a fully operational year-round train station, providing direct rail access to showground precinct events and an easy stroll to the largest Queensland hospital, which employs more than 7,200 staff and has thousands of visitors a day. It is estimated that a trip from the Ekka to the CBD will only take about two minutes when the project is complete.

With the reference design now determined, the full scope of the project, including infrastructure requirements and property impacts, has been identified. Inevitably, with any major transport infrastructure there will be an impact. I urge any business or property owner to get briefed and involved in the project. Cross-river rail community consultations have been run to provide an opportunity for the community to find out more about how planning for the project is progressing and to have their say on the potential benefits and impact of the reference design. I strongly urge everyone to get involved in the planning of this much needed infrastructure project, by either attending an event or going online—

(Time expired)