

## Heritage Citation



**Bowen Bridge & approach walls**

### Key details

<b>Addresses</b>	Road Reserve Bowen Bridge Road, Bowen Hills, Queensland 4006
<b>Type of place</b>	Bridge
<b>Period</b>	World War II 1939-1945
<b>Style</b>	Stripped Classical
<b>Geolocation</b>	-27.451173 153.028882
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — September 2002
<b>Criterion for listing</b>	(A) Historical; (E) Aesthetic

Bowen Bridge and its approaches comprise Brisbane's first overpass of a railway level crossing, demonstrating the impact of population growth and increasing motorised transport on major approaches to the CBD. The battered porphyry approach walls are finely crafted and contribute to the visual amenity of the surrounding areas.

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## History

Bowen Bridge Road was carried over the Exhibition Branch Railway line in 1941, and bears the distinction of being the first level-crossing elimination in Greater Brisbane. It was considered that the works would greatly improve the approach to the city, and on completion would provide an excellent approach as the northern entrance to the City.

In 1935 signals had been installed at the busy Bowen Road level crossing, where electric trams far outnumbered trains. Co-incident with this work was the widening of Bowen Bridge road, between Gregory Terrace and the new Women's Hospital during 1939-40.

The Queensland Government's Coordinator General of Public Works arranged for the construction of the Bowen Bridge road viaduct and the project was well advanced by the close of 1940. A reinforced concrete bridge and embankment to carry all road traffic (including trams) was constructed over the former exhibition railway level-crossing. The relocation of services, including water and electricity, accounted for half the total cost of the Bowen Bridge scheme. Savings were made by reclaiming rock removed from the wall at the hospital frontage and utilising it on the Breakfast Creek Canalisation Works.

On 5 November 1940, Council called for tenders to dress and finish the stone wall at Bowen Bridge Road on the General Hospital frontage, together with an access road to the hospital and extension of drainage from Campbell Street to O'Connell Terrace. During this period, the widening of Bowen Bridge Road from Herston Road to Butterfield Street also commenced. Both works were well advanced at 30 June 1941, and the entire project was completed in December of that year.

Since then, the intersection of Bowen Bridge Road and Herston Road has been modified on several occasions. In December 1999, the Brisbane City Council awarded Leighton Contractors a contract to design, construct and maintain the Inner City Bypass. The tunnel below the Bowen Bridge area is part of Stage 1 of the Bypass that extends from Hale Street in Milton to O'Connell Terrace. This part was opened in November 2001.

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## Description

Bowen Bridge carries road traffic over the Exhibition branch railway line. Its approach walls extend from the Royal National Association (RNA) showgrounds entry near Bowen Park, to the grounds of the old Queensland Museum. In recent years, the area has undergone substantial change due to the construction of the Inner City Bypass. The Bowen Bridge section of the Bypass was completed in 2001.

Northern approach The approach to the bridge from the north begins near the RNA gates. The Bowen Bridge

Road carriageway is supported on the eastern side by a battered porphyry wall that increases in height as it approaches the bridge. Atop the wall is an in-situ concrete barrier featuring recessed arched panels. A crude barbed wire fence has been angled away from the barrier to prevent access to the RNA grounds below.

On the western side, none of the original approach remains following the Inner City Bypass works. The new concrete balustrade is a replica of the original. On the eastern side, a section of wall and balustrade lining through with the new tunnel below has been removed and replaced. The new opening in the stonework is clearly defined on each side and reveals the new supporting structure for the roadway over the tunnel.

### **The bridge**

The reinforced concrete bridge over railway lines comprises 4 spans. The bridge's piers taper in section from bottom to top and feature a series of arches. On each side of the bridge the piers are connected by shallow arches. The piers divide the balustrade above into simple rectangular panels.

### **Southern approach**

The battered porphyry wall supports the carriageway on both sides of the southern approach. On the eastern side the concrete balustrade with the arched panels resumes south of the bridge and continues until it abuts the brick and cast iron fence to the old Queensland Museum's grounds. On the western side the porphyry retaining wall is visible from the access road to the railway line.

Located at one of the busiest intersections in Brisbane, Bowen Bridge and its approach walls have withstood numerous roadworks and have been modified to accommodate the Inner City Bypass running below. Although the stone retaining wall has been disrupted on the eastern side, its gently tapering curved approach to the bridge is still apparent.

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## **Statement of significance**

### **Relevant assessment criteria**

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria under the Heritage planning scheme policy of the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*. It is significant because:

#### **Historical**

##### CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history

as the first level-crossing elimination project in Greater Brisbane, prompted by an increasing population and use of motorised transport.

## Aesthetic

### CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance  
for its finely crafted, curved stone approach walls.

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## References

1. Brisbane City Council - City Assets Branch *Conservation Management Study* Stage 1 Report. November 2002
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**Note:** This citation has been prepared on the basis of evidence available at the time including an external examination of the building. The statement of significance is a summary of the most culturally important aspects of the property based on the available evidence, and may be re-assessed if further information becomes available. The purpose of this citation is to provide an informed evaluation for heritage registration and information. This does not negate the necessity for a thorough conservation study by a qualified practitioner, before any action is taken which may affect its heritage significance.

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