

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP

Leader of the House

Minister for the Coordination of Transport – COVID-19

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for Suburban Rail Loop



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FIRST LOOK AT NEW LEVEL CROSSING-FREE BELL AND PRESTON STATIONS

The Victorian Government has unveiled the designs for the new Bell and Preston stations which will be built by the end of 2022 as part of the project to remove four of the state's most dangerous and congested level crossings.

More than 100,000 Victorians will experience easier journeys every day through the northern suburbs, where boom gates can be down for up to 40 per cent of the morning peak at Oakover Road, Cramer Street, Murray Road and the notorious Bell Street level crossing – the busiest of all 75 level crossings the Government is removing.

The rail line will be raised over roads on the Mernda line which, combined with the removal of four level crossings on the Upfield line, will significantly reduce delays on Bell Street – freeing up one of Melbourne's busiest arterial roads and making the journey from the Tullamarine Freeway to Preston and Heidelberg quicker and safer.

The new stations at Bell and Preston will rejuvenate the precincts and create safer, more direct links between public transport, local shops and parking – as well as a dedicated cycle path to separate cyclists from foot traffic.

The new stations include lifts and stair access to each elevated platform, a comfortable waiting room at ground level, undercover seating areas and improved lighting. The stations will feature more bicycle storage, new toilets and a pedestrian forecourt at each entrance as well as solar panels, rainwater tanks and LED lighting.

As the gateway to Preston's shopping district, the design of Preston Station incorporates the liveliness of the area and will allow Preston Market shoppers to more safely and easily enter and exit the station via an open forecourt.

The new Bell Station reflects Preston's rich history with references to post-war rooftops and the local art and culture scene. An extended forecourt creates open space between the station and Bell Street with more greenery, seating and a better east-west connection across the rail line – linking Garnet and Isaacs streets for pedestrians and cyclists.

Following community feedback, the project will create significant new green open space for the community underneath the two-kilometre rail bridge between Oakover Road and Murray Road. The project team is working with the Preston Open Space Advisory Panel to further develop the designs for the space.

The level crossings will be removed by the end of 2022 and the open space under the elevated rail line will be ready for locals to enjoy in 2023. For more information visit levelcrossings.vic.gov.au.

Quote attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan

"We're getting on with removing four dangerous level crossings from Preston and making Bell Street completely level crossing-free – a huge win for the local community as well as commuters from right across Melbourne's north."

Quote attributable to Member for Northcote Kat Theophanous

"My community wants to see more open and useable space in Preston – and that's exactly what we're delivering with new open space under the rail line, new pathways, premium stations and a modern, safe precinct for residents."

Quote attributable to Member for Preston Robin Scott

"I'm excited to see these new designs – with the elevated rail design meaning pedestrians, cyclists and motorists can cross the railway line without boom gates and bells holding up their journey."

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