

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for Suburban Rail Loop

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COUNTING DOWN TO BRAND NEW STATIONS FOR PRESTON

Two brand-new train stations are just weeks away from opening following the Andrews Labor Government removing four level crossings from Melbourne's north.

Trains will stop at the new Preston and Bell stations on Monday 5 September, with passengers set to experience a new station with comfortable waiting rooms, undercover seats and lighting – creating safer and more direct links between public transport, local shops and parking.

Trains will also start running on a second elevated rail track on Monday 5 September, with the new rail bridge nearing completion. Since May, trains on the Mernda line have been running on a single elevated track between Regent and Thornbury stations and express through Bell and Preston stations.

Passengers are asked to plan ahead while the construction team puts the finishing touches on the new stations and connects the new section of track to the existing line, with buses replacing trains on sections of the Mernda line from 9pm Friday 26 August to last service Sunday 4 September.

As the gateway to Preston's shopping district, the design of Preston Station incorporates the liveliness of the area, with the bright coloured façade echoing the vivid array of produce that can be found at Preston Market. At Bell Station, the external wall patterns reflect Preston's rich history with references to post-war roof tops and the local art and culture scene.

The new stations will have 194 solar panels across the two stations, the equivalent of taking around 780 cars off the road each year.

Over the coming months, work will begin on building three MCGs of new open space under the rail line in Preston featuring play and exercise areas and gathering spaces. Works are expected to be completed next year.

The open space will include landscaped areas with more than 700 trees and around 150,000 plants and a shared walking and cycling path to connect the new Preston and Bell stations. The landscaping work will be completed by Wamarra, an Aboriginal owned and operated civil contractor.

When the new stations open, lifts and stairs will be operational at Preston Station, however while work continues on the lifts at Bell Station until late September, passengers requiring lift access will need to travel to Thornbury or Preston. An accessible taxi will be available at these stations for passengers to complete their journey.

Four level crossing in Preston are gone for good including Melbourne's most dangerous and congested Bell Street – significantly improving safety and traffic. Further major road and rail upgrades in Melbourne's north include the removal of the Reservoir level crossing and opening of the new Station, with Keon Parade level crossing next to go and a new station built.

For more information, or to plan your journey, visit bigbuild.vic.gov.au

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Quotes attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan

“The countdown is on to open the brand-new Preston and Bell stations, creating safer and more direct links between public transport, local shops and parking.”

“We’ve transformed the way people in Preston move around and slashed travel times with the removal of four level crossings including Bell Street – the most dangerous and congested level crossing in Melbourne.”

Quote attributable to Member for Northcote Kat Theophanous

“We’re excited to start enjoying the brand-new stations when they open in the coming weeks. There is so much for our community to look forward to - with modern stations, safer roads, quieter trains, better walking and cycling paths and fantastic new open spaces for the community to come together and connect.”

Quote attributable to Member for Preston Robin Scott

“I’d like to thank the community for their patience while these vital works continue, and we can’t wait to see the benefits for passengers once the stations open in September.”