

## Preston Reconnected

### Design, movement and delivery objectives for the Bell-Preston elevated rail corridor

#### A more connected city

- The removal of four level crossings at Oakover Road, Bell Street, Cramer Street and Murray Road
- A new continuous, meandering, north-south Shared User Path, at least 3m wide, underneath the rail bridge from Oakover Road to north of Murray Road.
- Separate bike and pedestrian pathways around Preston Station to minimise conflict.
- High quality east-west connections that:
  - Prioritise people, then bikes at Warrs Street, Esther Street, Adeline Street, Gertrude Street, Garnet Street, Emery Street, Herbert Street, Edith Street and Clinch Avenue.
  - Prioritise bikes, then people at Showers Street and Bruce Street.
- A raised crossing at Oakover Road and Cramer Street that prioritises pedestrians and cyclists, with signalised crossings at Bell and Murray Road.
- Safe pedestrian crossings and access at each level crossing allowing for improved movement.
- No infrastructure that prioritises cars, such as roundabouts and signalised crossings, along Cramer Street as a designated street for people.
- Designed to allow future east-west connections from Adeline Street to St John Greek Orthodox college, Darebin Arts Centre and Ray Bramham Gardens at Bell Station and at Preston Station in line with the future 421 High Street connection.

#### New useable, beautiful, green open spaces

- Four hectares of new open space (equivalent to two MCG football ovals) and six new high-quality, green, usable parks, designed in collaboration with the community, including:
  - **A village green adjacent to Bell Station of at least 3000m<sup>2</sup>**, containing open lawn areas for informal recreation or community picnics, multi-age play spaces and areas of native planting.
  - **A civic park in front of the Preston Station, which prioritises pedestrians** containing spaces for meeting, rest, reflection and celebration amongst the trees.
  - **A linear park between Bell and Bruce Streets**, containing a mix of passive and active park activities, such as playspace, outdoor gyms and/or dog-parks, and seating nodes.
  - **A pocket park** at the north west corner of the Preston City Oval, containing an active recreation play areas (urban jungle).
  - **A pocket park north of Murray Road**, adjacent to the Northern Pipe Trail shared user path with seating areas and multi-age play spaces.
  - **A pocket park at Railway Place East near Oakover Road** with an outdoor gym, seating areas and natural shade.
- New public spaces are seamlessly integrated with existing open spaces such as Preston City Oval (including relocating the cricket nets) and Cramer Street Pocket Park.

## A rewilded corridor rich with local plants, trees and local fauna

- All significant mature trees are accommodated into the design, with five new trees for any tree removed.
- Increased tree canopy coverage to 25% on public land in line with Darebin's *Urban Forest Strategy*.
- New trees are healthy, with locations that maximise sunlight and are suitable for deep ground planting.
- New vegetation is made up of at least 95% indigenous and native plants which respond to specific climatic and environmental conditions of the precinct including soil types, wind, temperature, rain, and solar access noting the impact of the rail infrastructure.
- There are multiple nature-based play spaces for kids to enjoy and connect with nature.
- Along the rail, interpretative signage promotes learning and appreciation for local biodiversity and nature.
- Indigenous 'woody meadow' feature plants of local provenance to Darebin, in collaboration with local universities.

## Enhanced local neighbourhoods

- Movement, connection and local character in existing streets and paths are improved by the level crossing removals and design.
- Local streets are not negatively impacted by new traffic movements, including Adeline, Esther and Garnet Streets near Bell station.
- Bell Station's Metro Trains Melbourne depot is relocated away from residential neighbourhoods of Darebin to create new open space.
- Disruptive infrastructure like substations are relocated if possible, or visually mitigated.
- New feature lighting around each station is designed to avoid spilling into nearby residential properties.
- Rail noise is kept to a minimum through noise attenuation bridge design.
- Visual clutter is reduced through undergrounding powerlines at Oakover, Bell, Cramer and Murray.
- Any future use and development of adjoining parcels of State Government owned land is tested with the community and includes defined community benefits.

## Safe and welcoming for all

- Stations and the corridor are safe both day and night, designed with women and the gender diverse in mind.
- Design of stations and paths provides equitable, Age Friendly, and dignified access to all parts of community, especially walkers and 'wheelers' (walking frames, wheelchairs, motor scooters).
- Design discourages graffiti and anti-social behaviour by using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- The entire 2km shared path is well-lit with areas for people to use.
- The corridor has frequent exit points, framed by low level landscaping and narrow tree trunks for safer, clear lines of sight.

## Integrated facilities for cyclists

- Cycling facilities are well lit, secure and easily accessible.
- 180 free bike parking spaces at Bell Station will have and a new enclosed Parkiteer providing 26 additional spaces.
- 280 free bike parking spaces at Preston Station a new enclosed Parkiteer providing 52 additional spaces.

## Safe and accessible commuter car parking

- Commuter car parking is located on the western side of the railway line at Preston and Bell Stations, and is easily accessible from main roads.
- The number of commuter carparking spaces is the same as currently at each station.
- Accessible car parks, 'kiss & ride' drop offs and taxi ranks are conveniently accessible from station buildings and designed to minimise pedestrian conflict.

## Improved public transport connections

- Bus stop waiting, transfer and shelter facilities in line with Preston's importance as an Interchange under the Department of Transport's *Movement & Place Framework*.
- Real time Passenger Information Displays within Preston and Bell Stations and at bus stops - showing both bus and train live tracking.

### Bell Station

- The relocation of the existing bus stop on Bell Street to outside Bell Station, fully accessible when the new station opens.

### Preston Station

- Direct and convenient access between station exits and bus stops on both sides of Murray Road.
- Bus priority on approach and departure of Murray Road/St Georges Road/Spring Street intersection

## Celebrate local heritage, art and identity

- The corridor's design celebrates the local qualities of the four distinctive precincts along the corridor:
  - **Oakover Green** – *This burgeoning precinct undergoing significant transformation, is rich in local heritage and stories. Once Preston's employment heart, it was home to tanneries and the manufacturing industry, employed many tram and railway workers and is rich in indigenous history with the Aboriginal Advancement league.*
  - **Bell Arts** - *With the iconic Bell Street and new premium station at its centre, the Bell Arts precinct is a vibrant welcome mat to Darebin Arts Centre (DAC) and its burgeoning urban creative communities including Gertrude Contemporary International Gallery nearby.*
  - **Preston Oval** - *With the iconic Preston City Oval at its centre, this precinct is an urban recreation hub that interfaces with the Preston Market and a new*

*neighbourhood surrounding it, the new premium station, the Bruce Street urban neighbourhood and key links to Melbourne Polytechnic, St Georges Road and High Street*

- **Preston Central** – *With the celebrated Preston Market and High Street at its heart, the precincts rich multicultural heritage and the stories of its diverse community embedded*
- The corridors' unique indigenous, cultural and multicultural heritage is reflected through the architecture and design of open space and infrastructure.
- Bell Station Building Heritage and history is celebrated by incorporation into the design of the Precinct.
- The social, cultural and architectural heritage of Preston Market is responded to in designs for Preston Station.
- A Creative Arts Curator is employed to integrate art into built form elements throughout the corridor - architecture, landscape, lighting, signage, rail pylons at rail bridges over Bell, Cramer, Murray and Oakover, reflecting local stories and working with indigenous and local artists.
- The Aboriginal community is engaged with early, continually and meaningfully throughout the design process of new open spaces to final construction.
- The multiculturalism and history of the area is reflected in less formalised recreational infrastructure, such as spaces for Trugo, bocce or other socially connecting activities.

## **The highest quality architecture and built environment**

- The new Bell & Preston station buildings are modern and contemporary, exemplifying design excellence and respond to local context in terms of its built form, aesthetics, culture, heritage, and design language.
- High quality and durable materials are used for station buildings, ensuring the building ages well.
- Station entries address key public spaces with safe, comfortable, well-lit and sheltered station platforms.
- Activation of the station building on ground level next to key pedestrian areas and public spaces.
- The utility, infrastructure and back of house components of the station functions are integrated into station design and don't clutter the public realm.
- The premier Preston Station includes escalators in its design to ensure this busy station continues to function well in a growing precinct.
- The rail bridge is at least 7m high, allowing natural light and minimising shadows and wind tunnels along the new public open space corridor.

## **Designed-in easy and sustainable maintenance**

- The corridor is made up of well designed, easy to maintain spaces that will look as good in 20 years as they do on day one.
- Public spaces feature materials which are high quality, durable, low maintenance, and minimise opportunities for unwelcome graffiti.

- Locals and visitors can easily find their way around with new information and wayfinding signs designed in line with the *Darebin Signage Strategy*.
- The materials of buildings and infrastructure are sustainable, using concrete from sustainable sources and other recycled materials, and concrete aggregate for the Shared User Paths.
- The corridor is greened with indigenous, native and hardy plants for sustainability and easy maintenance.
- Playspaces, active recreation spaces, dog parks, community spaces are designed using robust, sustainable materials and landscaping.
- The corridor is water sensitive with Water Sensitive Urban Design incorporated into open spaces to maximise useability for all users
- The initial maintenance period provides a high quality and frequency of regular maintenance to ensure successful establishment of plants/landscaping during the defects period.
- Appropriate reuse of materials in new open spaces. This can include train station elements, track, heritage elements and landscaping (habitat tree logs).

## **Proactive support for our local communities and businesses to minimise the disruption they will face during construction**

- Local businesses, Preston Market management and traders, the Preston Central Business Association and community are supported throughout construction disruptions and the additional works post construction.
- Clear communication and consultation with due notice prior to impacts such as road closures, power outages or occupations, with individual Preston Market businesses and the Preston Market management and traders as well as High Street businesses, and their concerns actively incorporated into delivery activities. This includes information sessions as a complement to written documentation.
- Communication strategies and provision consistently addresses the digital, written and verbal information needs of CALD and non-CALD businesses. This includes information in many languages and provided in person as much as possible with translators.
- A program of temporary activation events to support local businesses thrive during the works, including 'shop local' campaigns and activities that bring/retain customers and visitors. Programming takes a coordinated approach with Council and the Business Association to ensure a significant positive impact.
- Minimised disruption to local communities by ensuring haulage and delivery of goods for the project occurs only on major roads and during off-peak times.
- Maintaining the current level of pedestrian and cycle access throughout disruption.
- Public parking is kept free for the community, visitors, shoppers and local workers.
- Construction staff and contractors and their work vehicles are provided with alternative parking with no reduction in car spaces available to the public.
- Existing public car parks such as that at Preston Market, continue to be publicly available throughout the construction period.
- Construction timing minimises disruption on busy market days (particularly Fridays and Saturdays).
- Connection is maintained for people accessing Preston Station and the Market while the station is in operation.

- LXP and workers creatively support a diverse range of local business types and sectors, including through encouraging worker patronage across different goods and services and sourcing goods and services for prizes.

## **Targeted employment & training opportunities to local people who need it the most**

- Prioritise employment and training opportunities to Darebin residents impacted by Covid-19 through the LXP across profession types.
- People from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds are employed to create a more diverse workforce target of 3% and add value to the project.
- Darebin based social enterprises are engaged and provide employment opportunities for the level crossing removal project.
- Local artists are engaged to design and create work decorating construction hoarding panels.
- Partner with local tertiary education institutions to support local employment and training opportunities.