

On track for a rail boon

\$5.4bn project set to put infamous Boggo Road site back on the map

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THE train station that shares its name with a notorious prison looks set to become Brisbane's biggest suburban public transport hub with the opening of Cross River Rail.

Boggo Road is the southern end of the underground line, and is expected to handle more than 23,000 passengers every

weekday by 2036 at the station that hooks up the University of Queensland green bridge routes, the Brisbane Metro and overland rail routes.

It will serve PA Hospital as well as the UQ Ecosciences precinct, home to some of the nation's largest research institutions and more than 7500 health and science professionals, as well as the historic former prison site.

The Courier-Mail, in conjunction with the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority, is presenting a series looking at the project and what it will bring to the state.

Being at the point where other rail lines and routes cross makes for some engineering challenges, according to Cross River Rail's builders.

The delivery authority's project director (tunnels, sta-

tions and development) Jeremy Kruger said vibration from passing trains was the biggest challenge for tunnelers.

Emergency vibration alarms will be installed at the work site - they are already in place at Roma St, where the first tunnelling began last week - that shut down the work if early warning levels are reached.

"It is quite a congested rail corridor," Mr Kruger said. "As you tunnel, you go directly under Park Road railway station."

"You have the challenges of tunnelling under a railway line."

"One of the critical technical issues is to control settlement and vibrations so that the trains above can continue to operate safely while we are mining underneath."

More than 7700 people will work on the Cross River Rail project over the five years of construction, with 400 local suppliers signed up and more than 160 apprentice and traineeship positions filled of 450 to be created.

The 10.2km rail line will run from Dutton Park to Bowen Hills, including 5.9km of twin tunnels under the Brisbane River and Brisbane CBD.



BEST TOURS BAR NONE LOOKING UP

ANDRE GRIMAUX

ONE of Brisbane's famous tourism experiences faced a bleak future at the peak of the pandemic lockdown. Boggo Road Gaol managing director and ghost and crime historian Jack Sim said it looked "pretty grim". But bookings for the daily history tours are picking up, the holidays were busy and school groups return this term. The \$5.4bn Cross River Rail project, with its underground station a stone's throw from the jail's front gates, promises to put Boggo Road on the map. Mr Sim said the area needed a modern transport service.

"When I started here in 1998, the jail was a long way out of town," he said. "There's now a need to make it easier to get people to this precinct. We get international visitors from Europe and Asia - less so at the moment, obviously - and they expect to use first-class public transport. That's what Cross River Rail will be, and we think it's a great investment for this area."

Major construction works are due to be completed in 2024.

Jack Sim from Boggo Road Gaol Tours is hoping for an increase in visitors once the Cross River Rail project is complete.
Picture: David Clark